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IMPACT OF COLEBROOK'S JANAMSAKHI MS. ON THE HISTORY OF THE SIKHS

Kirpal Singh*

The Colebrook's *Janamsakhi* first came to my notice in the early sixties when I was editing and annotating the *Janamsakhi Meharban* Manuscript which was subsequently published by Khalsa College, Amritsar in 1962. Again I got the opportunity to have the comparative study of the *Janamsakhi* literature when I wrote '*Janamsakhi Parampara*' which was published by Punjabi University, Patiala in 1969.

The *Janam-Sakhis* are the traditional biographies of Guru Nanak (1469-1539) founder of Sikhism, written during the 17th and 18th centuries in the Punjabi (Gurmukhī) script. Biography in its modern form wherein it portrays the important events and influences that shaped the life of an individual from his birth to the last day of his life and endeavours to assess the works or deeds, is a literary genre of recent origin. The *Janam-Sakhis* are different both in form and content. They presented the life of Guru Nanak either in the form of Platonian dialogues wherein his teachings were highlighted or in the form of anecdotes or stories delineating his greatness.

The first impulse which brought about the stories of great men was based on the elements of wonder and amazement at the marvellous deeds of the heroes. It is for this reason that Alfred Lyall states that 'the hazy atmosphere, marvellous and miraculous obscures all early origin of race and religion and clouds the beginning of history.'¹ But this state of affairs did not last long, 'soon the splendid visions which surround the youth of man begin to fade into common daylight of growing civilization.' Thus the dry land of authentic History emerges slowly out of the sea of fable until gradually things which appeared natural and acceptable to elder generation become incredible or suspiciously improbable. 'The delight in awe and astonishment is superseded by a taste for accurate thought and rigorous evidence. Toynbee has rightly stated that the Historian's point of view is one of the mankind's more recent acquisitions.'²

The legends about the great heroes in the past form the earliest source of information. A man who has made his mark upon generation who overtops the rest by bravery, piety or some peculiar powers of mind or body becomes among the unlettered folk the source and subject of legend. These legends rescued and transmitted to posterity are what could be saved out of flood of deep oblivion.

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1. Alfred Lyall, *Asiatic Studies, Religious and Social*, Vol. VI, p.326.
2. Arnold Toynbee, *Historian's Approach to Religion*, p.1.

Thus however, exaggerated or complicated a legend might be, is based on a kernel of truth. At times that kernel may be very small.

The traditions about Guru Nanak's achievements got current when he was still alive. The contemporaries began to talk about his great journies, his visits to Macca, Madina and Baghdad, his discourses with the *Pirs* of Uch and Multan, his religious debates with Gorakh Panthis, Qazis and Pandits. This was the starting point of legend formation. The traditions of Guru's achievements were first recorded in the First *Var* of Bhai Gurdas (-died in 1637 A.D.), the nephew of Guru Amar Dass the third Sikh Guru. When Bhai Gurdas wrote he had as his close associate Baba Buddha who had lived with Guru Nanak and had knowledge about his great deeds. All the *Janamsakhis* have therefore been greatly influenced by the writings of Bhai Gurdas which preserve the earliest written traditions of Guru Nanak.

The *Janamsakhis* are of four kinds: -

1. **Colebrook's *Janamsakhi* :**

It has two other names- *Valayat vali Janamsakhi*, as it had been brought from old India office Library, London. *Puratan Janamsakhi* was the title given to it by Bhai Vir Singh, an eminent scholar who edited it and got it published in 1926.³ We shall discuss it in details in this paper.

2. **Meharban's *Janamsakhi* :**

Meharban was the grandson of Guru Ram Dass, the fourth Sikh Guru. It was written in the 17th Century. Recently the writer of these lines edited and annotated and got it published in 1962. It is in the form of dialogues and gives a lot of information.

3. **Bhai Bala's *Janamsakhi* :**

It is the most popular and highlights the achievements of Guru Nanak.

4. **Bhai Mani Singh's *Janamsakhi* :**

This was compiled after the death of Guru Gobind Singh. It gives in detail the Guru's journies in the western side viz. Central Asian Countries. Bhai Mani Singh was an eminent scholar and is reported to be the author of number of books.

The *Janamsakhi* discovered by Henry Thomas Colebrook is associated with his name. H.T. Colebrook was son of George Colebrook, Chairman of East India Company in 1769. Henry Thomas was born in 1765, educated privately and was appointed as Assistant Collector in 1762-63. For sometime he was Professor of Hindu Law in the Fort William College. He took keen interest in the work of Asiatic Society and was made its Vice-President in 1803 A.D.⁴ He was the president of the Society from 1807-1814 A.D. After his retirement he went to England where he founded Royal Asiatic Society, in 1823. He died in 1837.⁵ He was a great Sanskrit Scholar. He wrote several research monographs. He donated his Sanskrit manuscript collection to the East India Company's library in 1818 A.D.⁶ But the records of Old India Office Library indicate that the Gurmukhi manuscript, now known as *Janamsakhi* was donated in 1815-16 A.D.⁷ Perhaps he could not decipher it owing

3. Alfred Lyall, *Asiatic Studies, Religious and Social*, Vol. VI, p.326.

4. *Asiatic Researches Index*, Cosmo Publication, New Delhi, 1980, p.227.

5. *Dictionary of Indian Biography*, C.E. Buckland, Indological Book House, Delhi, 1971, pp.37-38.

6. *Ibid.*

7. E.Trump, *The Adi Granth*, p.(vi).

to its peculiar Gurmukhi characters. In the India Office Library it remained unidentified for more than half a century.

In 1869 Dr. Ernest Trumpp, a German scholar was appointed to translate the *Adi Granth*, the Sikh scripture as its contents were unknown to the Western World. While studying the Gurmukhi manuscript preserved in India Office Library he was able to decipher, and translate it into English. In the introduction of his '*The Adi Granth*' he gave detailed reference to the *Janamsakhi* which was later on came to be known as *Colebrook's Janamsakhi*. With the publication of his *Adi Granth* the contents of the *Janamsakhi* came to be known to the Sikhs in 1877 A.D.

Since this *Janamsakhi* was quite different from the current *Janamsakhi*, there started a stir among the intellectual Sikhs and Sikh theologians who made the request to the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, Sir Charles Aitchison to have the manuscript brought to India for study. He was good enough to arrange some zincographic copies which were distributed among selected institutions. Bhai Vir Singh, a well known scholar, edited and published it under the title *Puratan Janamsakhi*.

The Colebrook's *Janamsakhi* manuscript does not indicate the name of its author nor its date of compilation. Some scholars believe that it was written by Sewa Das, but it has not been confirmed by any other source. With regards its date of compilation Dr. Trumpp writes : 'There is the obvious age of the language and that of script both of which resemble the Kartarpur version of the *Adi Granth*.⁸ The language and diction of manuscript especially use of vowel sound in place of preposition are akin to that of the *Adi Granth*. It has been stated in the *Janamsakhi* that '*Kaljug Char Hazar Sat Sai Paintees Bars Vartya*'.¹⁰ Which means *Kaljug* has passed 4735 years. If we calculate with the help of *Indian Emphemeris*¹¹ the above noted indication gives the year 1634 A.D. So it can be safely presumed that it was compiled or copied in 1634 A.D.

There has been very wide impact of *Puratan* or *Colebrook's Janamsakhi*. The study of its contents caused a lot of excitement among the Sikhs. The correctness of the date of birth of Guru Nanak began to be debated as it had been stated there that Guru Nanak was born on *Vaisakh Sudi 3, Sambat 1526 B.K.*, whereas the Sikhs following the *Janamsakhi* of Bhai Bala have been celebrating the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak on *Kartik Poornima*, as it was stated there that the Guru was born on *Kartik Poornima, Sambat 1526 B.K.* Bhai Bala's *Janamsakhi* has been most popular. Strangely enough there was not even single reference to Bhai Bala in the *Puratan Janamsakhi* wherein *Bhai Bala's Janamsakhi* Bhai Bala dominates. The close study of the texts of two *Janamsakhis*, especially the names and nomenclature used there leads us to conclude that the *Puratan Janamsakhi* was older. Take for instance Syedpur is mentioned in *Puratan Gurusakhi*. It is a small town—Eminabad in the modern district of Gujranwala—Pakistan. Syedpur has been mentioned in *Tuzik-i-Babri* as it was attacked by the Babar's forces.¹² In Bhai Bala's *Janamsakhi*

8. India office Library No.10L, MS., p. B6.

9. *The Adi Granth*, p.(ix).

10. *Antka, Puratan Janamsakhi*, Khalsa Samachar, Amritsar, 1948, p.135.

11. *Indian Emphemeris*, L.D. Swami Kanme Pillay, Vol, VI, Delhi, 1982, pp.70-71.

12. *Babar's Memoirs*, Translated by Erskine, Vol. II, p.149.

the name of the same town mentioned is Eminabad which came to be used much later. Similarly for Carpenter the word used in *Puratan Janamsakhi* is *Badisut* whereas in Bhai Bala's *Janamsakhi* the word used for Carpenter is '*tarkhan*' which was used much later.¹³ Keeping all this view it appears that Dr. E. Trumpp's following assessment appears to be correct :— 'The later tradition which pretend to have knowledge of all the details of the life of Nanak was, therefore compelled to put forth as voucher for its sundry tales and stories. Bhai Bala who is said to have been constant companion of Nanak from his youth up, whereas our old *Janamsakhi* does not even once mention Bhai Bala. If Bhai Bala had been constant companion of Nanak and a sort of mentor to him as he appears now in the current *Janamsakhis* it would be quite incomprehensible why never a single allusion should have been made to him in old tradition'¹⁴

As an impact of *Puratan Janamsakhi* there has been controversy between Khalsa Dewan Amritsar and Khalsa Dewan Lahore during the last decades of 19th century. The majority of the former believed that the Guru's birthday was in *Kartik*, where the majority of the latter stressed that it was *Vaisakh*. When Bhai Gurmukh Singh, a teacher of Khalsa Dewan Lahore was ex-communicated, one of the charge was that he did not believe in Bhai Bala's *Janamsakhi*.¹⁵

There had been sharp differences over this issue. Giani Gian Singh, famous author of *Twarikh Guru Khalsa* believed Bala's *Janamsakhi* to be correct¹⁶ where Karm Singh, who is considered pioneer of Sikh history research, wrote a monograph, '*Katak ke Vaisakh*', got it published in 1912 A.D. in which he proved that Guru Nanak was born in *Vaisakh*.

This controversy has now been settled to some extent because some other old manuscripts like *Janamsakhi Meharban*, *Nanak Bans Parkash* etc. have been found which collaborate with *Puratan Janamsakhi* that Guru Nanak was born in the month of *Vaisakh*.

The Western Scholars have taken different views about *Puratan* or *Colebrook's 'Janamsakhi'*. M. Macauliffe has written :

"It contains much less mythological matter than any other Gurmukhi source on life of the Guru and it is much more rational, consistent and satisfactory narrative. We shall make this ancient *Janamsakhi* the basis of our own details of the life of Guru Nanak."¹⁷

Dr. W.H. McLeod who has written number of books, in his '*Guru Nanak on The Sikh Religion*' (1968) has stated that all *Janamsakhis* are 'thoroughly inadequate sources'. It will not be out of place to discuss his point of view with reference to the *Puratan Colebrooks 'Janamsakhi'*. We shall be examining his views one by one:

(i) In the *Puratan Janamsakhi*, (Sakhi No.42)-there is a mention of *Dhanasri des*. There is also a specific mention of a river and Cannibal tribes. Dr. McLeod

13. *Tarkhan* is of Arabic origin from '*tarkheem*', which means 'to cut'.

14. Dr. Ernest Trumpp, *The Adi Granth*, Introduction, p.5.

15. *Punjab dian Lehran* (Punjabi), Shamsheer Singh Ashok, 2nd Edition, Patiala 1974, pp.110-11.

16. See, Introduction '*Katak ke Vaisakh*', Karm Singh, Amritsar, 1912.

17. M. Macauliffe, *Sikh Religion*, Vol. I., Introduction, p. (L XXVI).

describes '*Dhanasri*' as an 'unidentifiable and evidently non-existent place' (page 70 of his book). But had he taken more pains, he would have definitely identified this place as *Dhanasri* Valley in Assam surrounded by Cannibal Naga Tribes. *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. XI (The Oxford University Press, 1908) page 286 gives the following description of *Dhanasri* Valley:

"Upper portion of *Dhanasri* Valley is a plain of considerable width shut between Nagas and Mukir Hills, covered with dense tree forests except in neighbourhood of Golaghat'.

(ii) 'Again on page 80 he mentions 'non-existent land of Asa' mentioned in the *Puratan Janamsakhi*. Without carefully going through the contents of the *Sakhi*, Dr McLeod arrives at a conclusion that 'Land of Asa' is non-existent. But in the *Sakhi* there is specific mention of Raja Samunder, whom Mr. McLeod has read as Sham Sunder (See, page 42). According to *Encyclopaedia of Ethics* (New York 1958, Vol.II, page 135):

'In still earlier times when Ahoms entered the Brahmaputra Valley, there were twelve subordinate rulers or chiefs who were known as Bara Bhuiya and these claimed to be the descendants of Samundra.'

Hence the 'Land of Asa' is Assam. It may be pointed out that during the 16th Century when Guru Nanak visited Assam, there existed two kingdoms. One was in Kamrup and other was in Assam, East of Assam was the *Dhanasri* Valley—all three have been distinctly mentioned by *Puratan Janamsakhi*.

Hieun-Tsang, however, has described the whole of modern Assam region as Kamrup.

Ain-i-Akbari mentions Kamrup and Assam as two separate entities as there existed two independent kingdoms.

(iii) Dr. McLeod has rejected Guru Nanak's visit to Sumer on the following ground: 'First, there is the mythical location which is given as the setting for discourse. Mount Sumeru exists only in legend not in fact'. In a footnote on the same page quoting Dr. A.L. Basham, he states, 'Mount Sumer is Mount Meru. In the light of this observation, it is not a mythical mountain which does not exist.

The Deputy Commissioner Almora, Mr. Charles A. Cherring in his '*Western Tibet & British Border land*' (Published in London in 1906) at page 3 quoting Waddell from his book '*Buddhism in Tibet*' writes: And in the very centre is the King of mountains Meru, Kailash, towering erect, like handle of a mile-stone while half way up its side is the great wishing tree, the prototype of our Christmas tree.

This has been confirmed by several authors who have written on the history and geography of this region. Thus the mountain Sumer is not a mythical mountain as alleged by D. McLeod. It is Kailash which has been visited by the *Sadhus* since the times immemorial. The various routes to Kailash followed by the pilgrims have been described by Charles A. Cherring in the book noted above.

(iv) Regarding Guru Nanak's visit to Nanakmata as described in *Puratan Janamsakhi*, Mr. McLeod writes, 'The connection with *Nath Yogis* explains the claim made in later *Janamsakhi* tradition that original name was Gorakhmata. This claim may well be true but it is most unlikely that original context was an incident involving Guru Nanak.'

Regarding Nanakmata, there is specific mention in *Khulasatut-Twarikh* compiled by Sujan Rai Bhandari, in 1697. A.D. It has been stated there that Guru Nanak visited Nanakmata and the very name of the place indicates his visit there. The revenue records preserved at Gurdwara indicate that the place was hollowed by Guru -Nanak.

‘Now the time has come when the old Indian literature may be studied with open mind and reassessed. In this way we would find *Puratan Janamsakhi* to be very valuable historic piece of literature.

WESTERN UNDERSTANDING OF BANDA SINGH BAHADUR : EIGHTEENTH CENTURY PERSPECTIVE

*K.S. Bajwa**

Much has been written on Banda Singh Bahadur and his achievements over the past three hundred years. But, even a cursory look at the historical literature produced during this period reveals that Banda Singh Bahadur has not yet received a treatment from the historians/ scholars which he deserves. For instance, titles appeared so far cover his life, personality, battles, administration, martyrdom, memorials, legacy etc. Barring a few, these works fail to observe norms of research methodology and at best be termed as chronological and descriptive rather than critical and logical, hence these are stereotyped. The scholarship fails to evaluate his contribution to strengthen the Sikh movement and Sikh ethos for which he had been appointed as the leader of the *Khalsa Panth* by Guru Gobind Singh himself. Also, they appear to be overlooking the military tradition of the Khalsa carried by him. Needless to say that the tradition had been set up by Guru Hargobind Sahib by introducing the concept *Miri-Piri* and it was perpetuated by Guru Gobind Singh through the creation of the Khalsa institution.

However, to reconstruct the life and achievements of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur we have multilingual sources such as Persian, Gurmukhi, English and French etc. But most of the historians of Banda Singh Bahadur have used these sources partially and uncritically. For instance, they invoke evidence from a particular source and that too from a particular part of that very source to suit their own view point without looking into the objective of the original author or the nature of the evidence. In other words these sources have not been used critically and in totality. Hence, western historical writings written between 1716 and 1790 A.D. are being analysed to determine the significance of the evidences for a meaningful reconstruction of the life and works of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur.

The only British eyewitness account of the event of the martyrdom of Banda Singh Bahadur and his associates in Delhi in 1716 A.D., has come to us in the form of a letter. It was addressed to the Honourable Robert Hedges Esq., President and Governor of Fort William, & Council in Bengal by John Surman and Edward Stephenson. Both of them were ambassadors of the East India Company's Council in Bengal to the Court of Emperor Farrukh-Siyar. This letter was written from Delhi

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on 10th March, 1716.¹ However, in this letter Banda Singh Bahadur has been referred as a 'great Rebel Gooroo', who had created havoc in the province of Lahore. At length, however, he was captured along with his family and 780 Sikhs by Abdul Samad Khan, the Governor of Lahore. All of them were fettered and brought to Delhi. They were severally mounted on camels which were kept out of the city of Delhi for that purpose. Besides, there were about two thousand heads struck upon poles who had fallen in the battle. However, all alive were presented before the Emperor who sent them into 'a close prison'. Except Banda Singh Bahadur and his close confidants, all were beheaded at the rate of hundred a day. Banda Singh Bahadur and 'most of his *mutsuuddys* were kept alive for some time in the hope 'to get an account of his treasures in the several parts of his kingdom'. They too were put to death later on.

However, both of these British ambassadors were surprised to see that not even a one of the victims apostalized for the sake of life. The writers assert that 'it is not a little remarkable with what patience they undergo their fate and to the last it has not been found that one apostalized from his new formed Religion'.² No doubt this piece of information is very brief, yet being an eyewitness's account it is very significant to comprehend the true character of the Sikh Movement under Banda Singh Bahadur that he had conferred upon it. Besides it delineate his unquestionable belief in Sikh faith.

In 1768 A.D., a Jesuit Francis Xavier Wendel observed that after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh at Nanded, the Sikhs were led by whom Wendel described as 'another *calife* or *pire*', although he was 'without right and without title'.³ The writer opines that, Banda Singh Bahadur was 'a *morid* of Baba-Nanec' and before coming into the fold of Sikhism, he was a leader of 'the *gousayns*', also called '*Saniassi*'. However, soon after, he 'conceived the designs of a broader denomination'. Having gathered a good number of Sikhs and others, he under the 'auspices of Nanec-gourou' undertook to make himself the master of the land of the five rivers.⁴ Volume and intensity of his excursions obliged the governor of

1. This letter was read at the consultation at Fort St. George on Tuesday, 5th June, 1716 A.D., and is to be found in the *Madras Diary and Consultation Book for 1715 to 1719*, No. 87, Range, 237, in the India Office (Commonwealth Relation Office), London. Ganda Singh, *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, Indian Studies: Past and Present, Calcutta, 1962, p.49.
2. John Sernan and Edward Stephenson, 'Massacre of the Sikhs at Delhi in 1716', Ganda Singh, *ibid.*, p.52.
3. Francis Xavier Wendel, *Memories de L'origine et establishment des Siks*, Eur Mss ORME OV8, Pt 14, 67-103, Orme Collection Mss, Oriental India Office Collection, British Library, London. Received by Robert Orme in 1722. Reprinted in original French in Francois Xavier Wendel, *Les memoires de Wendel sur les Jat, les Pathan, et les Sikh* (ed.), Jean Deloche (Paris Ecole Francaise d'Extremé - Orient, 1979), part III. It was translated by Jewan Singh Deol: "Wendel's History of The Jats, Pathans, And Sikhs", *"Sicques, Tigers, Or Thieves : Eyewitness Accounts Of the Sikhs (1606-1809)"*, (eds.) Amandeep Singh Madra and Paramjit Singh, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2004, pp. 9,16.
4. Wendel denominates the Sikhs as 'vagabonds' and 'troops of brigands', *ibid.*, pp. 12, 16.

Lahore to focus 'all his vigilance', in this regard. But his resources failed him to suppress the Sikhs. Eventually the Mughal army under Bahadur Shah had to march against Banda Singh Bahadur. As a result, Banda Singh Bahadur alongwith his associates had to retreat in the mountains of Gomaun (Kamaun), where it was not easy to pursue and capture him'.⁵ Wendel further asserts that in the hills, 'he was confined and did not dare to appear so daringly at all, although, he did not fail to consolidate himself there and make himself at the same time more numerous and stronger, while his bands took to the field in small numbers to extract from there their subsistence and spread terror. They continued to do this quite frequently, but not with as much success so as to appear so openly'. Deployment of large number of Mughal troops in the plains and nearness of the provincial capital made it 'nearly impossible for the Sikhs to leave their retreat without risking being pursued immediately, taken or powerfully chased'.

Also, they were 'still few and too new to the profession. Hence, the Sikhs needed more time 'to make themselves more skilful' in warfare.⁶

However, Bahadur Shah died before crushing the Sikhs under Banda Singh Bahadur. His death followed by war of succession and brief reign of incompetent Muhammad Shah gave enough leisure to the Sikhs to the point where they openly attacked and became master of several places in the plains. Once more they made themselves master of Lohgarh fort and made it 'the centre of the exploits' that they intended under the leadership of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur.⁷

However, after securing the royal throne, Furruksiyaar 'sent a positive order to the governor of Lahore to join his forces and act in such a way as to seize the person of Banda Singh Bahadur 'in whatever way possible, break up his party and relieve the province at the soonest of a race so abominable and extravagant as was this new class of brigands under the name of Sikhs'.⁸ After receiving such command, Abdul Samud Khan decided to take stern action against the Sikhs. Wendel has assigned three reasons to such an action of the governor of Lahore. He states that Abdul Samud Khan was "partially stimulated by the damage that his Govt. had suffered from them and partially to avenge himself on this sect that scorned so openly the law of Mohamed, and finally, to follow the order of the court, took himself there quickly and pursued so closely the Sikhs and their leader that in the end he forced them to throw themselves into a mountainous place of difficult access called Loh-garr."⁹ However, the Sikhs fought gallantly and defended themselves obstinately. At length Abdul Samud Khan was successful in overpowering them but not without much difficulty. 'Having been reduced to the utmost', extremity in that place', opines Wendel, Banda Singh Bahadur and 'the people who were left with him had no option but to surrender; he (Banda Singh Bahadur) was taken with six or seven hundred of his followers'. Baba Banda Singh Bahadur was locked 'in-

5. Amandeep Singh Madra and Paramjit Singh, *ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

6. Amandeep Singh Madra and Paramjit Singh, *ibid.*, p.17.

7. *op.cit.*

8. *op.cit.*

9. Amandeep Singh Madra and Paramjit Singh, *ibid.*, p. 17.

a cage' and the others attached in pairs by fetters on their feet', put on 'camels to be presented to the king at Dehly'.¹⁰

On the basis of the eyewitnesses, Wendel argues that 'the gaiety and contentment of these miserable ones when they entered into this condition, laid in with chains, into the capital, which would yet become the scaffold of their torture. One cannot grow weary of praising the firmness and constancy with which they viewed and scorned the death that they would all suffer soon after, without exception'.¹¹ He goes on stating that 'after having tried great deal and needlessly to make them Musulmans, promising them life and the emperor's mercy, a proposition which they did not want to listen to at all, the provost of the city ordered that they be beheaded, which would be carried out during the course of a week, and every day one hundred were taken from the place of torture to be executed, they became so joyous and pleased that they fought over turns and each wanted to be first. Just as their lives were being taken away, they were once more offered mercy on the condition mentioned above, but instead of accepting it, they pressed those who had to cut their throats to hurry and not postpone any longer pleasure of finding themselves earlier with their Nanec, whose name they always had on their lips'.¹² Wendel further affirms that Banda Singh Bahadur was the last to be executed. He was 'probably spared expressly to disturb him with the sight of so many of his followers who had been finished off before his eyes; but nothing was capable of affecting him, scorning with disdain every mercy and every offer that could be made to him, he protested that he would have been absolutely unworthy of commanding so many lives as had been sacrificed for his consideration, in front of and for him, if he did not have at least enough constancy to follow them in death'.¹³ Thus Banda Singh Bahadur and his associates were finished off. However, Wendel emphasizes that 'one can say that this large number that had been wiped out instead of diminishing the sect actually served to augment it and make it more respectable and general'.¹⁴

It is tempting to suggest that Wendel's account happened to be not only contemporary but also the first work on the Sikh struggle against the Mughal establishment. Needless to say that the writer under consideration was the first European observer of the Sikh Movement and its military resources. Seen from the ideological angle, Wendel correctly presented Banda Singh and his followers as the followers of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. He appreciated the bravery, boldness and fearlessness with which the Sikhs were fighting in the face of martyrdom likely to be inflicted upon them by the rulers of Delhi. The Sikh manliness was self evident from the Sikh bearance of terror and torture from the hands of the Mughal officials.

Antoine Louis Henry Polier (1741-1795), who acquired the Mughal title

10. *Op.cit.*

11. Amandeep Singh Madra and Paramjit Singh, *ibid.*, p. 17.

12. *Op.cit.*

13. Amandeep Singh Madra and Paramjit Singh, *ibid.* pp. 17-18.

14. *Ibid.*, p.18.

Arsatan-i-Jang, was Swiss engineer.¹⁵ He was nephew of Paul Phillip Polier, the Commandant of Fort of George (Madras).¹⁶ Writing in the 1770s about the Sikhs, he confused the achievements of Banda Singh Bahadur with Guru Gobind Singh. For example, while narrating the Sikh struggle against the Mughals he says that, "the fame of Gorou Govind, who then made his appearance and of whom many prodigies were related, contributed greatly to establish this sect. This reputed saint soon found himself at the head of a numerous force, and began to make excursions and converts having sword in the hand. He exerted himself so successfully, that at last he drew the attention of Government towards him'. Further he asserts that 'an army was formed in or about 1715 under the command of Abdus Samad Khan Subedar of Lahore', by the order of Emperor Furrukhsiyar. The Emperor commanded him 'to exterminate the sect'.¹⁷ However, 'after many marches and pursuits', Abdul Samad Khan came up with their main body, which he totally defeated. He had even the good luck to take Gorou Govind (Banda Singh Bahadur) himself prisoner. The Gorou was sent to Delhi, set up in an iron cage and afterwards put to death'. Referring to the general proclamation issued by the Emperor against the Sikhs, Polier says that 'his disciples, wherever they were caught, were on their refusal of turning Mohammedans, immediately executed.'¹⁸ Thus information provided by Polier is though sketchy and a factually inaccurate yet it is significant for it shows the determination with which the Sikhs fought against the Mughals under Banda Singh Bahadur, besides being firm in their holy faith.

Major James Browne in his *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sikhs* (1788), provided a bit systematic account of the Sikh struggle against the Mughals under Banda Singh Bahadur. To Browne, Banda Singh Bahadur was a 'native of village Pundory' in the Jalandhar Doab. Before commencing his career as a warrior, he was, 'a *Biragee Fakeer* and had been for many years 'the intimate friend' of Guru Gobind Singh. About the mission of Banda Singh Bahadur, Browne holds that after hearing the destruction of his (Guru Gobind Singh) defenceless family, he gave way to the deepest impression of grief and resentment, which at length settled into a fixed determination to seek revenge'. To achieve his determined end, Banda Singh Bahadur approached 'to all the most powerful and zealous sicks, who had been the followers of *Gooroo Gobind*'. Having 'excited in them the same spirit with which he himself was actuated and enrolled himself in the fraternity of the Sicks, with surprising diligence and activity, and aided by uncommon abilities', he, 'collected the sect together in arms from all quarters and inspired them with the most ardent spirit of revenge'.¹⁹

Political chaos which resulted due to the struggle for throne between the sons of Aurangzeb gave an opportunity to Banda Singh Bahadur to collect together a large number of irregular army of the Sikhs and attacked Nawab Wazir Khan at

15. A.L.H.Polier, *The Siques*; Ganda Singh, *ibid.*, p.53; Amandeep Singh Madra and Paramjit Singh, *ibid.*, p.67.

16. Ganda Singh, *ibid.*, p.56; Amandeep Singh Madra and Paramjit Singh, *ibid.*, pp.67-72.

17. Ganda Singh, *ibid.*, p.57.

18. Ganda Singh, *ibid.*, p.57.

19. Ganda Singh, *ibid.*, pp.28-29.

Sarhind. Wazir Khan came out to give battle to the Sikhs with all the troops he had under his command. The Sikhs 'inspired by enthusiasm and revenge' gave a total defeat to the ruling forces. Wazir Khan himself was killed at the spot and greater part of his army was cut into pieces. The Sikh forces occupied Sarhind. Entire family of Wazir Khan was put to death along with every dependent and servant belonging to him.²⁰ Diwan Sucha Nand was torn to pieces, with every circumstances of cruelty which savage revenge could dictate.²¹ All the mosques and tombs were destroyed. Browne further holds that such was the terror of the Sikhs that all the inhabitants of Sarhind both Muslims and Hindus sought safety not only in submitting to their authority but professing to be a member of the Sikh fraternity by embracing Sikhism. This, however, is an exaggeration and contrary to the facts. To Browne Banda Singh was 'a man of great art and address'. To increase his force he encouraged with a view : 'treating those with the most flattering kindness who came into his sect, and those who refused with unrelenting severity'.²² As a result of this policy, very soon the territories from Panipat to Lahore came under the authority of the Sikhs. Besides his policy, Banda Singh was benefited from the absence of Emperor Bahadur Shah from the capital with the main army. The forces available in the provinces of Lahore, Delhi or Agra were not sufficient to 'undertake the reduction of the insurgents'.²³

However, from the news of the defeat and death of Wazir Khan, Bahadur Shah surmised the intensity of the Sikh movement under Banda Singh Bahadur. He at once decided to move with his forces from Deccan to the Punjab. Consequently, Sultan Kuli Khan was ordered to command an advance army of cavalry and artillery with instructions that, 'he should march by way of Delhi, and thereby stop the progress of the sick on that side, protecting the inhabitants as much as possible, to prevent the insurrection from spreading, and to put every man to the sword that he should find with his hair and beard at full length - that being the characteristic external of the Sicks'.²⁴

Sultan Kuli Khan attacked the Sikhs near Panipat. In the ensuing battle, 'there was a great slaughter on both sides, but especially on that of the sick, who being destitute of discipline and unprovided with artillery, suffered very severely'. However, when Kishore Singh Bakshi, to whom Banda Singh Bahadur had given command of this division of his army, being killed by an arrow, the Sikhs began to give way. At length the defeat of the Sikhs was total. However, the survivors fled towards Sarhind to join Banda Singh Bahadur.²⁵

Reinforced by the Emperor under the command of Munim Khan, Sultan Kuli Khan marched towards Sarhind. To meet the Mughal forces, Banda Singh drew up his army which consisted from forty to fifty thousand horse and foot. The battle was long and bloody but eventually the royal army was victorious with 'terrible

20. Ganda Singh, *ibid.*, p.29.

21. *Op.cit.*

22. *Op.cit.*

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 29.

24. Ganda Singh, *ibid.*, pp. 29, 30.

25. *Ibid.*, p.30.

slaughter of the Sicks'. Banda Singh alongwith the remainder of the army shut himself in the fort of Lohgarh. The fort was closely invested by the Imperialists. Meanwhile, the Emperor Bahadur Shah himself joined the camp of Sultan Kuli Khan. By that time siege had lasted a month. The 'besieged finding their provisions and ammunition fail them, and being determined to sell their lives as dear as possible, they sallied out of the fort sword in hand'. A desperate but unequal conflict ensued. The 'greater part of the Sicks were cut into pieces on the spot, many were taken prisoners, and together with other prisoners were sent to Dehly, where they were all publically executed, after having been offered their lives on condition of embracing the Mussalman faith, which they rejected with contempt'.²⁶ Thus Browne's treatment of Banda Singh Bahadur though, is in detail and systematic as compared to Polier yet it does not differ materially so far as his perception of Banda's mission and achievements are concerned. Also, it is not free from factual errors.

Writing in 1790s, George Forster, describes Banda Singh Bahadur 'a disciple' of Guru Gobind Singh who had attended him at Deccan before coming to Punjab', after the demise of his master. Claiming a merit from his late connection with Guru Gobind Singh, he raised a 'small force' and 'in various desulatory enterprises, established the character of 'a brave but cruel soldier'. However, his successes at length drew to his standard whole body of the Sikh nation. Having confidence in the strength of his army and emboldened by the absence of the Emperor, Banda Singh after subverting the petty Mohammeden Chiefs attacked Wazir Khan at Sarhind. Wazir Khan fell in an action which 'was fought with an obstinate valour but ended in the total defeat of the imperial troops'.²⁷ The Sikhs, holds Forster, 'expressed an extraordinary joy at this victory, as it enabled them to satiate their revenge for the death of the sons of Govind Singh'. Wazir Khan's family along with a multitude of the inhabitants were put to death. Not only this, mosques were 'overthrown or polluted' and the dead, torn out of their graves, were exposed to the beasts of prey.²⁸ However, after the fall of Sarhind in 1710, the Sikh forces laid waste the territories up to the neighbourhood of Dethi.²⁹

'Alarmed at the progress' asserts Forster, and irritated at the cruelties they had exercised, he (Bahadur Shah) marched towards their stations with a determination to crush the sect, and revenge the injuries that had been inflicted on Mohamadan religion.³⁰ Sultan Kuli Khan, however, attacked the Sikhs near Sarhind and 'put them to flight after a bloody conflict'. They took refuge in the fort of Lohgarh. The fort was besieged. Many of them were made prisoners while Banda Singh Bahadur escaped. Those who survived the disaster alongwith Banda Singh Bahadur could not be subdued till the death of Bahadur Shah. Like Bahadur Shah, Jahandar Shah, who succeeded him, was unable to put restraint on the progress of

26. Ganda Singh, *ibid.*, p. 30.

27. George Forster, *Journey From Bengal to England*, Language Deptt, Punjab, Patiala, 1970 (2 Vols) Vol. I, p.303.

28. *Ibid.*, pp.303-304.

29. *Ibid.*, p.304.

30. *Ibid.*, p.305.

the Sikhs. However, during the reign of Furrukhsiyar, Abdus Samad Khan, the governor of Lahore, attacked the Sikhs vigorously and in a battle gained a decisive victory. Those who escaped 'took shelter with Banda in Lohgarh, but being closely invested and reduced to extreme distress from hunger, they surrendered at discretion'. The captives were carried in triumph to Delhi where they were 'exhibited to the inhabitants of the city in an ignominious manner'.³¹ Forster asserts that they 'met a deserved fate, for their savage and often unprovoked cruelties. Yet they met it with an undaunted firmness, and died amidst the wondering praise of the populace'.³²

However, the contribution of Banda Singh Bahadur to the Sikh movement was not less significant. Forster asserts that 'the Sicque Common-wealth acquired an active strength from the spirit and valour of Banda, who had inspired them with zeal which rendered meritorious every act of cruelty to the enemies of his faith, and their attacks, until opposed by the collective force of the empire, an irresistible. The success of this fierce adventurer, had allured to his standard a numerous body of proselytes : some to obtain a protection against the rapacity of the Sicque Government; others to take shelter from the oppressions or just demands of the empire : whilst many embraced the new doctrine, from the hope a participation in the plunder of the Punjab'.³³

Retrospectively, an analysis of these accounts reveals that these suffer from many deficiencies which are innate in an account by an observer having obviously less knowledge about the religion and language of the noble rebels (the Sikhs) about whom these were written. For example, these accounts are based on occasional observations of their authors and the information they got from the persons who professed to have authentic knowledge about the Sikhs. Also, some of them have based their accounts on the Persian chroniclers who usually were not correct and free from prejudice. Consequently, number of factual errors have crept into their accounts which have been repeated by the later historians of the Sikhs both Indians and non-Indians. Further some of them present sketchy and incoherent accounts reflecting strong biases.

However, inspite of all these inconsistencies, these accounts are very useful as they shed much light on the character of Sikh struggle under the leadership of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur against the Mughal Rulers between 1708 and 1716 A.D. which is not to be found either in Persian sources or in Gurmukhi sources which happened to be often termed as Sikh sources of 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. For instance, though these authors does not delve either on the early career of Banda Singh Bahadur or his meeting with Guru Gobind Singh, yet they provide significant insights to understand and reconstruct the life and achievements of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur. One can infer from these accounts that Banda Singh Bahadur was a baptised and chosen leader of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh before his demise at Nanded. Banda Singh Bahadur had a firm faith in Sikhism and died as a Sikh

31. *Ibid.*, p. 306.

32. *Op.cit.*

33. *Ibid.*, pp.311-12.

martyr. Also, we do not find any information relating to the innovations about diet, dress and salutation which were attributed to him by the 19th century Western as well as Indian historians. In other words, from Nanded to Mehrauli where he was martyred on June 9, 1716, he remained a true and firm believer in the Sikh faith. Above all, he was a brave and desperate fighter who shook the very foundation of the Mughal rule and became a legend for the coming generations in his own life time. He was the first to establish Sikh rule under the banner of the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh. Further more, Sikh military tradition which Guru Hargobind Sahib had instituted with the introduction of the concept of *Miri-Piri* and was perpetuated by Guru Gobind Singh through the creation of the institution of Khalsa, was rightly carried and perpetuated by Baba Banda Singh Bahadur, which eventually paved the way for the establishment of Sikh power in the land of the Five Rivers.

EVALUATION OF GURBILAS PATSHAHI CHHEVIN AND PARCHIAN SEWA DAS

Kavita Rani*

This paper presents two writings, the authenticity of which is always doubted by way of their authorship, the year of writing and their importance. Moreover, there is sufficient material contained in them, various aspects of which have not yet been attended for historical scrutiny. So this is our endeavour to examine these writings on the basis of research methodology adopted from the west in accordance with internationally accepted norms.

Let us check up the urgency felt to take them up. *Parchian*, the first writing taken up here stands generally neglected and the informative traditional account this book presents has not so far been fully utilized. Certainly there is a need to take it up in historical perspective. As for as the need to include *Gurbilas Patshahi Chhevin*, the second one is concerned, its text has been edited and an intensive study on the basis of comparison with various other writings toeing the line of fundamental sources is yet the need of the hour. Many aspects of these works have to be brought to lime light.

We first present here *Parchian*, a source that connotes *sakhis* authored by Sewa Das Udasi. The man belonged to *Udasi* denomination. It is a collection of fifty *sakhis* pertaining to the lives of ten Sikh Gurus. Eight *sakhis* pertain to Guru Nanak upto Guru Har Krishan, one to each Guru, four *sakhis* to Guru Tegh Bahadur and thirty-eight to Guru Gobind Singh.

As regards Guru Nanak, the author of *Parchian* observes that the perfect God resided within Guru Nanak's heart and He (the lord) was his only Guru.¹ Lack of positive thinking makes various superstitions and whims enter one's perception. This results in religious formalities and artificialities. It was on account of the utmost devotion of Guru Angad for Guru Nanak that he soiled his clothing into the foul smelling pond of dirty mud under his dictates. Still another episode unfolds how Guru Angad unreluctantly offered to eat a dead body on the commands of Guru Nanak.² The only one *sakhi* dealing with Guru Ram Das given in *Parchian* holds that the Guru showed great reverence to Baba Sri Chand when once he happened to see him. Baba Sri Chand, the son of Guru Nanak was a great man who possessed high morality and founded the prominent sect of *Udasis*.³ Only one

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1. Hari Singh (ed.), *Parchian Sewa Das*, Languages Department, Punjab, Patiala, 1962, p.51.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-64.
3. *Ibid.*, p.671.

sakhi pertains to Guru Arjan which states that Guru Arjan composed some hymns in honour of *bhaktas*. An episode relating to Guru Hargobind depicts that the Guru advised a Turk *dewan*, to pay respect to saints or holy men if he wants his own welfare. In one of the *sakhi* about Guru Tegh Bahadur the author narrates that the Guru remarked on the eve of his pontificate that the responsibility was heavy '*pot gauri hai*' and he was not capable of undertaking it. Then the *sangat* appealed to him to accept it solely because it was the will and directive of Guru Harkrishan. A *sakhi* about Guru Gobind Singh narrates that the Guru did not have any attachment with the worldly things. Relinquishment, resignation and renunciation were found in his very nature. In *sakhi* 39 relating to Guru Gobind Singh the narrator of *Parchian* imparts instructions to the readers to read the holy scriptures with correct pronunciation, accent and spellings quite seriously.

A manuscript copy of *Parchian* claims its completion in 1765 B.K. (1708 A.D.).⁵ Some historians, however, place it after second half of the eighteenth century without elaborating the point.⁶ However, the contents of the text go in favour of placing it in the later period than the one given in the text. The author of *Parchian* has not disclosed the sources of his information used in the work. But he deals with certain historical events in accordance with his capacity. For example he interprets *Zafarnama* according to his own notions.⁷ In fact, *Zafarnama* depicts certain episodes of Guru Gobind Singh's life which are to be taken up in historical perspective.⁸ There is no denying the fact that the points touched by Sewa Das Udasi in the context of *Zafarnama* probably to explain the position of the Guru are valid and are a part and parcel of the contents of the letter.

The author of *Parchian* refers to the help rendered by the Guru to Emperor Bahadur Shah in the war of succession. He does not explain whether it was a moral help or an assistance provided in the shape and form of supplying his men for the warfare. Anyhow, Sewa Das talks about good relations of the Guru with the Emperor but does not refer to the service theory. Some writers talk about the Guru having accompanied the royal camp but nothing comes out of this. *Tarikh-i-Bahadurshahi* holds that when Bahadur Shah's army was marching towards Burhanpur, Guru Gobind Singh came into these districts and accompanied the royal camp. The purpose behind this has not been mentioned. Khafi Khan in his *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, of course, corroborates the view that Guru Gobind Singh with two hundred horse-men remained with the Emperor for sometime on his march to Deccan.

A thorough study of Emperor Bahadur Shah's relations with Guru Gobind Singh rejects the service theory. As a matter of fact, the Guru's problem was to talk to Emperor Bahadur Shah about the treatment given to him, his sons and his

4. *Ibid.*, pp.82-95.

5. See, Hari Singh, *op.cit.*, p.44.

6. Cf. Ganda Singh, 'The Major Sources of Early Sikh History', in *The Khalsa over 300 years* (ed. J.S. Grewal & Indu Banga), New Delhi, 1999, p.17.

7. Hari Singh, *op.cit.*, pp.96-102 (Intro).

8. J.S.Grewal, *Essays in Sikh History*, Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar, 1972, p.63.

9. Hari Singh, *op.cit.*, pp.96-102 (Intro.).

Khalsa from the hands of indifferent Government officers. The Guru had previously tried to intimate Emperor Aurangzeb about the whole issue. He had sent *Zafarnama* also to him and moved to Deccan as well as to arrive at some points of negotiation but the demise of the Emperor let the matter linger on. The company of the Guru with Bahadur Shah for a long time was also a desiderative attempt towards this end but the Emperor's over busy routine and other royal formalities did not make it possible for the Guru to talk to the Emperor about the affairs associated with him and his *Khalsa*.

A learned historian clarifies the issue when he states "...to some of the modern historians of the Sikhs, however, the explanation of Guru Gobind Singh's presence with the Mughal Emperor in 1707-08 in terms of the Guru's unqualified submission to the Emperor appears to be highly unsatisfactory. The acceptance of *mansab* in particular appears to be in flagrant contradiction with Guru Gobind Singh's character and earlier career."¹⁰ Of course, Bahadur Shah aptly called the saint-king was most popular in Punjab and Shah Almi, one of the gateway of Lahore was named after him.

As a matter of fact, all *sakhis* in *Parchian* aim at preaching the teachings of Sikh Gurus. Each *sakhi* concentrates on some important points. To cite an example, Guru Tegh Bahadur himself went to Agra and arranged for his arrest. The Guru did it when he knew it very well that the Mughal Emperor was following a hard policy towards the non-Muslims. Even during the custody of the Mughals, the Guru showed a remarkable patience which is a proof of the height of his moral courage. The life of Guru Tegh Bahadur depicts that the life of disrespect and slavery is worst.

By way of affirmation we may say that *Parchian* by Sewa Das Udasi, a collection of fifty episodes in the form of *sakhis* unfolds the lives of the ten Sikh Gurus. Its significance lies in the fact that its author has compiled certain incidents after finding out their relevance in the Sikh religious literature. The selected episodes invariably impart religious instructions par excellence. Some of the important themes of Sikh history have not been taken up perhaps with the understanding that those are already known. For instance Guru Nanak's *udasis*, Guru Angad to Guru Arjan's specific contribution to the development of Sikh Religion, Guru Hargobind's martial policy, Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom and its importance in history, the creation of the *Khalsa* by Guru Gobind Singh etc.

Of course the writer of *Parchian* has sometimes gone astray from the code of conduct of the Sikhs but it helps to reconstruct the past on dynamic lines.

As regards *Gurbilas Patshahi Chhevin*, the second 'source' taken up here, it is a voluminous work.¹¹ Some of the scholars do not consider Sohan Kavi's *Gurbilas*, a writing of 1718 A.D. as given in the work itself.¹² This is chiefly because of some anachronistic words used in the text which assign it to the later period.

10. J.S.Grewal, *op.cit.*, pp. 67-68.

11. Sohan Kavi, *Gurbilas Patshahi Chhevin* (ed. Giani Inder Singh), Amritsar, 1968, p. 386.

12. For instance see, Surjit Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature*, Jalandhar, 1988, p. 272.

The references of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and *Sarai Nur Din* are irrelevant and are considered interpolated in a work, which claims to have been written in 1718 A.D. as per its internal evidence. In fact, this work needs more probe into the facts lying unclarified. We have discussed this issue in the present paper along with its authorship. The fact remains that the *Gurbilas* under reference is a detailed work on the life and times of Guru Hargobind and gives good results when compared with other writings. For instance, the author of *Sakhi Bhai Gurdas* or *Sikhan-di-Bhagat Malla*¹³ states that Guru Arjan himself had come to believe that it was the need of the time to take to arms. This task would be undertaken by his son and successor of Guru Hargobind. But such like statements cannot be taken as authentic without any clear evidence because the Guru himself sacrificed his life for the cause of his principles in a peaceful manner. Writers like Teja Singh and Ganda Singh¹⁴ suggest that circumstances after the martyrdom of Guru Arjan with tortures took such a shape that Guru Hargobind wore two swords of *miri* and *piri* and took to warfare. Another example among several others to prove that comparison with other sources with *Gurbilas* is beneficial may be that of holding Chandu Shah responsible for the torture and demise of Guru Arjan by Sikh writers like the author of *Mehma Prakash*, *Gurbilas* etc. But a study of sources like *Tuzak-e-Jahangiri*¹⁵ and *Maktubat*¹⁶ prove beyond doubt that the fanatic Emperor Jahangir was himself responsible for the martyrdom and individuals like Chandu added fuel to the fire. In this way the authors and interpreters play a significant role in the reconstruction of history. Let us further clarify that the cause of anachronistic remarks found in the *Gurbilas* becomes clear if we give correct interpretation to the statement of the scribe that he added certain facts at the time of making the first copy of the manuscript.

Some of the important themes discussed meritoriously in this work are : the unknown facts about the life of Baba Budha, Baba Atal, Bhai Gurdas, the details from the laying of the foundation of *Akal Takht* by Guru Hargobind to the activities of the Guru upto his last days including the wearing of the two swords of *miri* and *piri*, the formation of a sort of army at the *Akal Takht* and the major contribution of the Guru for the development of Sikh religion. The *Gurbilas* gives a very authentic and effective picture of the Sikh-Mughal struggle during the pontificate of Guru Hargobind.¹⁷ Nevertheless, this work is very useful on the background and complete period of the pontificate of Guru Hargobind.

Guru Hargobind as well as Guru Gobind Singh had to be up in arms against tyranny and oppression. Infact, the crux of the problem was that the Sikh Gurus

13. *Sakhi Bhai Gurdas* or *Sikhan-di-Bhagat-Malla*, M/687, Punjab State Archives, Patiala, 282 B, 283 A.

14. *A Short History of the Sikhs*, Patiala, 1994, p. 34.

15. Jahangir, *Tuzak-e-Jahangiri*, Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow, n.d.

16. *Maktubat-e-Rabbani*—Letters exchanged between Sheikh Ahmad Sirhandi, the leader of Muslim revivalist Movement and Murtaza Khan. One such letter (quoted by Dr. Ganda Singh—Vol. I, Part II, p. 22, Letter no. 47) in *Samajak Vigian Pattar*, No. 54.

17. Sohan Kavi, *op.cit.*, pp. 151-152, 146-47, 150.

considered their struggle against the Mughals as a defensive measure for safeguarding the natural rights whereas the fanatic Mughal rulers took it as a source of militancy. Guru Hargobind's martial activities are reflected by sources like *Bhat Vahis*, Mobid or Mohsin Fani's *Dabistan* and *Gurbilas* authored by Sohan Kavi. These works are indispensable though the last but one source is in Persian.

It must be pointed out here that nothing is available to us with regard to the life of the poet or his background. Those who reject Sohan Kavi as its author assert and affirm that in some of the manuscripts this name is not mentioned. Still another version claims that one Bhagat Singh was the author of this work. In fact, he was the person who according to the internal evidence of the work asked Bhai Mani Singh to explain the *pauri* of the *var* of Bhai Gurdas being cited by the *dhadis* at Nanaksar (Nankana Sahib) '*Panj Piale Panj Pir Chhatam Pir betha Gur bhari*',¹⁸ and Bhai Mani Singh narrated the biographical account of the Sixth Guru. However, the author is not so important as the contents; the year of its writing and its copies were prepared subsequently by different scribes. It was, however, the custom of those days that the writers and scribes did not disclose their names perhaps on account of respect for the Guru.

The anachronism found in the work is chiefly because some writers fail to take notice of the fact that the author of this work has used the words '*Granth Karta*' for himself and '*likhari*' for the copyist.

Some of the cardinal points taken up in this voluminous work include the birth of Guru Hargobind, his childhood, his preliminary education, his wedding, Chandu's enmity, martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev, various shrines and *sarovars* (sanctified tanks), the construction of *Akal Takht* and the martial activities of the Guru there, battles of Guru Hargobind against the Mughals, the births and weddings of Guru's sons, the well known disciples of the Guru like Baba Budhaji, Bhai Gurdas, Painda Khan and many others, the rejoicings and the condolences, the confinement of Guru in the Fort of Gwalior and the allied concerns. The biographical details are, of course, interesting and valuable.

The details of the battles of Guru Hargobind have been given by the author of *Gurbilas* — Battle of Rohila¹⁹ (near Beas), Battle of Amritsar²⁰, Battle of Mehraj²¹, Battle of Kartarpur.²²

Gurbilas is the earliest work on the life of Guru Hargobind and is informative, exhaustive and written more or less in historical perspective. It promises plausible account of history constructed on the basis of an overall survey of the information.

By way of conclusion we may say that *sakhis* of ten Sikh Gurus given by Sewa Das Udasi contain somewhat different and useful material which needs to be

18. Bhai Gurdas, *Varan*, *var I*, *pauri* 48.

19. *Gurbilas*, p. 314.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 269.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 410.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 458-59.

evaluated in historical perspective. Myths and unhistorical matter should be disregarded. This can be easily done by comparing the contents of the *sakhis* with authentic historical sources. Similarly, *Gurbilas Patshahi Chhevin* which contains subject matter dubious as well as useful exclusively on Guru Hargobind should also be evaluated in historical perspective. Anachronistic remarks and myths should be removed by Comparison with useful historical data. In this way, both the works can be meticulously used for the reconstruction of the history of the Guru period.

IMPACT OF EMILY EDEN ON SIKH PORTRAIT-PAINTINGS

J.S.Bhatia*

Miss Emily Eden was the first English lady to visit Lahore during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1798-1839) who did the live sketches of Sikh royalty and even published them in England through lithography. Later on she included them in her larger work '**Portraits of the Princes & People of India**'. This master-piece of her reached Punjab in 1844 and took the artistic and aristocratic world of Lahore-Darbar by storm.¹ Her deftly done drawings with bold strokes and fresh technique proved to be the precursor of the golden decade of Sikh art in the middle of 19th century. Such was the indelible impact of this non-professional academic pioneer added to the earlier works of Foster, G.T. Vigne and Osborne that it inspired famous painters like, Schoefft, Solty Koff, William Carpenter, William Simpson to visit Punjab and paint legendary of Sikh heroism who had withstood the onslaught of British expansion in India. Their works were exhibited not only in India but also in U.K., France, Italy and Russia.² This was almost the maiden exposure of the brave Sikhs to the world at large. Sikhs, no doubt, owe a debt of gratitude to Emily Eden for all this.

Emily arrived in India by ship on April 21, 1838. After visiting Patna, Banaras and Allahabad she set out on her itinerary in Punjab. She went to Nalagarh, Ropar, Ludhiana, Ferozpur and Lahore, the capital of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. On her way back she visited Amritsar, Patiala, Nabha and Shimla, from where she went back to Delhi to return to England.³ During her widespread tours, she had prepared 27 sketches of different people and princes of India, which she published in a book form (size 25'x24' in black & white with grey tone) mentioned earlier. Among them nine drawings were of Sikh nobles of that time: Partap Singh, Sher Singh, Heera Singh and the great Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Two Sikhs, Nihang Singhs and last but not the least Karam Singh Maharaja of Patiala and his attendant. Artistically all the sketches were flawless, but the portrait of Maharaja Ranjit Singh stood apart in its grandeur and technique. It was taken to various museums in the Continent for display which added to the reputation of Emily. These days these famous sketches are proud possessions of Maharaja Ranjit Singh Museum, Amritsar; Victoria &

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1. Emily Eden, '*Portraits of the Princes and people of India*', Dicingson and Son, London, 1944.
2. Osborne W.G., '*The Court & Camp of Ranjit Singh*', London, 1840.
3. Vigne G.T., '*Travel in Kashmir, Ladak and Iskardon*', Vol. 2. London, 1842.

Albert Museum Calcutta and Prince-Bamba Lahore-Fort, Pakistan & also Victoria & Albert museum London.⁴

Her meeting with Maharaja Ranjit Singh on 7 December 1838 was the culmination of her 19 days stay in Punjab. The Maharaja was camping at Ferozpur at that time. She was accompanied by her brother George Auckland and sister Fanny Eden. Emily presented a portrait of queen Victoria painted by herself to the Maharaja. Next day the Maharaja held a royal Darbar in his tent. The visiting dignitaries were introduced to the local Princes and Sardars. During all these ceremonies Emily kept observing and taking mental notes in minute details of Maharaja's physiognomy, his robes, jewels and weapons in addition to the sentiments and expressions on his visage. The Maharaja, clad in red silk robe was sitting in a chair with one leg bent back under. However, she couldn't spot the legendary *Kohinoor* on Maharaja's body, which she ardently wished to see. Sitting beside the Maharaja was Heera Singh, the son of Dhian Singh Dogra, the Prime Minister. The young Heera Singh's tunic is bedecked with precious stones and his father dressed in yellow satin is armed with sword and shield. Four or five children whose fathers were martyred in battles were playing nearby. When they came out of the tent after about half an hour the Maharaja unpacked the queen's portrait and admired it greatly. He ordered it to be hung in front of his tent outside. Victoria's portrait was offered 21 Gun Salute. The Maharaja in his benevolence presented golden bracelets and shawl to Emily. Prince Sher Singh was especially instructed to look after the hospitality of English ladies.

Next day Sher Singh hosted a state dinner in his tent where Sher Singh's young son Prince Partap Singh was the cynosure of every eye. Holding an ornamental pistol in his hand, the young turbaned Prince looked no less than his would be uncle, the legendary Dalip Singh.

On the third day Emily and her entourage were given a glimpse of the Maharaja's military might: 15000 strong Sikhs cavalry marched in a ceremonial parade on bedecked elephants and horses. The feasts and festivities during the camp led her to believe that this oriental monarch was no less in glory and grandeur than the great British queen.

Then the Maharaja took his foreign guests to Amritsar to pay obeisance at the world famous Sikh shrine Golden Temple. Where she observed the interior scene of Golden Temple, but could not draw any form, but later her wish was fulfilled by William Carpenter, who had drawn the Priest, reading *Guru Granth Sahib*, in the Darbar Sahib & Nihang Singh sitting in front of *Akal Takhat*.

The next day Partap Singh visited Emily in her tent where she asked him to sit in a particular pose. Thus she made the first pencil sketch of the young prince who is sitting on Royal Chair and holding a gun, a sword laying on his lap. There is an attendant standing behind and a musician playing *Sitar*. She also gifted a golden

4. Archer, W.R., *Sikh Paintings*, Oxford, London, 1966.

5. Nijjar Bakhshish Singh, "Descriptive List of Paintings, Prints, Sketches and Sculptures in Punjab State Archives", 1970. Punjab State Archives, Patiala & also Catalogue, "International Art Exhibition on Ranjit Singh, New Delhi, (AIFACS Gallery, Rafi Marg, New Delhi), April 24, 1981 - May 3, 1981 by Govt. of Punjab.

ring to the prince which pleased him immensely.

The following day the team shifted to Lahore, where Emily was encamped in the beautiful Shalimar Garden. Prince Sher Singh visited her camp, according to Emily, to get himself sketched. He was royally dressed, laden with Jewels and rubies with a diadem on his turban. He threw a bag of money on the ground which amounted to a request for preparing his portrait. She made a beautiful live sketch of the prince which he liked very much.⁶ Similarly Heera Singh also expressed his wish for a portrait. Although it was late in the evening, she worked hard on his. 'Sketch as she knew Heera Singh was the favourite of the Maharaja. Emily also visited Nau Nihal Singh the grandson of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who happened to be sick at that time. Reclining against a pillow on a velvet bed Naunihal looked extremely handsome with big black eyes. He died of cholera soon after, and his sketch could not be made. Emily also visited the stables of the Maharaja, where she was shown about fifty horses beautifully saddled and bedecked. But one of them was excessively bejewelled and had a golden rein. It appeared to be Maharaja's favourite Lally and its private stud price even at that time as quoted at Rs. 37 lac. Emily drew in the front sketch of this horse and caretaker to show the splendor of the Eastern Monarch.⁷

After sometime Emily happened to visit the tent of the Maharaja, where she was amazed to find her brother the Governor General being painted in a profile portrait by an Indian artist. She sat on the left side of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the side he lacked eye sight. She also started making a sketch of the Maharaja. After finishing her own sketch, she observed the Indian artist at work. She was quite dismayed to find the native artistic ignorance of the use of light and shade in his drawing. He was using flatted colour to paint the portrait in a flat manner. She realized that the artist lacked academic training and was just an amateur painter. Her sojourn at Lahore came to an end with an out door sketching in natural surroundings.

She had gone a couple of miles out of Lahore, when she saw a group of Nihang Singhs, the Sikh knights-at-arms ceremonially dressed in blue and fully armed with swords, guns, daggers and spears. Thinking them to be fiery militants, she drew their sketch from distance and included in her collection. This Sketch is one of the rare portrayals of Nihangs. Her painting spree came to a close at Lahore with the sketches of elite body-guards of the Maharaja. On her departure from Lahore Prince Sher Singh presented her with costly gifts and a Kashmiri *Shawl*.

Next on her artistic itinerary was Patiala. Her meeting with Maharaja Karam Singh took place on 15th January 1839, when the Maharaja was leading a royal procession of Sikh Cavalry at its splendid most. Equestrian games and fire-works were the highlights of her welcome at Patiala. She left Patiala soon after that but not without presenting the Patiala royal with a skilfully drafted painting of the Raja mounted on an Elephant and Guard standing near by him.

6. J.J. Bhabha, "Marg Publication", Bombay, 1981.

7. Emily Eden, "*Up The Country*" (letters written to her sister from the upper provinces of India by Emily), Oxford University Press, London, 1930.

She also visited Nabha where the old Raja showed her his own paintings. Though not much impressed, she observed them with interest. No sketches were made there. From there she left for Simla and went back to England.⁸

A close study of the 27 sketches show her interest in Sikh royalty and its history. She also drew in addition other state princes like, Raja Hindoo Rao on horse, Raja of Nahan and two of his sons and a local native, Government servant and also animals like *Cheetah*, dogs and Hawk. But the drawings of Sikhs were a great challenge of that time. A portrait drawing by her expresses accurately both appearance and character. Head, hand, feet, weapons and warrior dresses are the pictorial language that reflects her growing understanding of Sikh psyche which was missing before her paintings. She was a deft drawing maker who had a strong academic foundation in technique and other subtleties of the art. She was a pioneer in the art of letting the principal figure dominate the canvas. She avoided the secondary figures by translating them into light impression and maintaining the perspective between principal figure & secondary. She was a master of the light and shade to give effects desired in the background and reserve the white space by maintaining a highlight on the subject. It was something novel to replace the landscape painting in portraits with chiaroscuros. A little breadth in the heads of Sikh-sketches shows her full acquaintance with the rules of proportionate anatomy. Her master stroke of doing away with the halo round the head of Rajas and Maharajas changed the old tradition of showing the monarchs and princes as divine beings. All these traits had a deep impact on the Punjabi and *Pahari* schools of paintings. Kehar Singh was the first Sikh court painter of Maharaja of Punjab who adopted her technique. She also opened the door for foreign artists. Schoefft was the first painter, who came to Punjab after her and sketched the Sikhs & Courtiers. Later he translated these sketches into big canvas and showed in an exhibition at Vienna in 1855. His six paintings on Sikhs highlighted the Sikhs and Punjab at global level for the first time in the world. Similarly Soltykoff came from Russia and sketched the Sikh-warriors of Sher Singh's Cavalry and he was followed by William Carpenter who had drawn the Sikh priest & Nihang Singh. Later William Simpson followed Carpenter and drew the same Nihang Singh in water colour. P. Trench executed a drawing of Maharaja Dalip Singh on horse back at Mussorie, such was the artistic fascination of Maharaja Dalip Singh's face that Winterhalter, George Beech, Paillet and Queen Victoria herself drew the portrait of Maharaja Dalip Singh in England.⁹

Within one decade of the arrival of Emily's book in Punjab, its impact was visible on almost all the drawing and portrait painters of Punjab. Her visual medium also introduced Sikhs, their history, their religion, their culture at world level for the first time. Thus the Sikhs owe a lot for their world identity to her pioneer work.

8. Pat Barr & Ray Desmond, "*Simla a Hill Station in British India*", B.R. Publication, Delhi & the Scoler Press, London.

9. McLeod, "*Popular Sikh Art*".

THE NAMDHARI MOVEMENT AND ITS MODERN SOURCES

Nazer Singh*

Modern sources of the Namdhari Movement are mostly found in Punjabi-Gurmukhi, Braj¹, and English languages. The sources can be classified into three categories given below:

1. The Police Sources since 1863 A.D.
2. The Namdhari Sources after 1857.
3. The Sikh Sources since 1944.

By putting the languages and categories together, one can begin with the sources in Punjabi. Following may be the works that need attention:

1. *Sat Jug* 2002 A.D. (*Bikrami* 2058 *Sammāt*). This number of *Sat Jug* is comprised of historical material available through the National Archives of India, New Delhi, and it refers to their significance.²
2. Kirpal Singh Kasel, *Tawarikh Sant Khalsa*³ (*Gur Itihas Bhag Pehla* upto 1906 A.D.)

The authors of these two sources in Punjabi language are highly sympathetic to Baba Ram Singh and his movement. Different from these works there is another book in Punjabi. It is *Kukian Di Vithya* by Ganda Singh.⁴ This book originated in 1930 but it was got published first in 1944 in Amritsar. Since 2000 A.D. *Vithya* has been getting published by Punjabi University, Patiala. As Ganda Singh has not been very popular with the Namdhari leaders, so we shall examine this work later on. It is essential to deal with *Tawarikh Sant Khalsa* in the first instance. It must be noticed that *Tawarikh* is comprised of a number of Namdhari authors. They can be enlisted as the following way⁵:

- i) Nahar Singh, *Namdhari Itihas Bhag Pehla*.
- ii) Inder Singh, Chakervarti, *Namdhari Itihas*, that he wrote during the time of Guru Pratap Singh (1890-1959).
- iii) Santokh Singh Bahawal (1845-1909), *Satgur Bilas 12th Patshahi* in two volumes.

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1. See, Swaran Singh Virk, 'Punjabi Literature on the Namdhari Movement', in Dr. Navtej Singh (ed.), *Re-Exploring Baba Ram Singh and Namdhari Movement*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2010, pp. 152-163.
2. *Satyug*, 2002 A.D. *Bik.* 2058, pp. 93-141.
3. Kirpal Singh Kasel, *Tawarikh Sant Khalsa, upto 1906*, Delhi, 2006, XIV, p. 903.
4. Ganda Singh, *Kukian Di Vithya*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2000, pp. V+192.
5. Kirpal Singh Kasel, *op.cit.*, pp. *passim*; and Dr. Navtej Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-163.

- iv) Jaswinder Singh, *Hukamname Satguru Ram Singh Ji* (1999).
- v) -do- Kuka Movement - Freedom Struggle in Punjab.
- vi) Beant Kaur, *The Namdhari Sikhs*.
- vii) Dhian Singh Kadrabadi (1852-1907), *Sri Satguru Bilas Patshahi 12th*.
- viii) Nidhan Singh Alim, *Jugh Paltao Satguru*.

The *Tawarikh* has 30 chapters in all, and its first 15 chapters deal with the History of Punjab before Baba Ram Singh's entry into it through the last phase of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his army (1828-1849). Chapter no. 16 of the *Tawarikh* deals with the *Aagman* of Satguru Ram Singh. Unfortunately, this chapter is followed by three more chapters on the Punjab's struggle against the British from 1845 to 1849 A.D. It is chapter no. 20 and 21 that treats Satguru Ram Singh in Bhaini.⁶ Interestingly, chapter 22 is devoted to Satguru Balak Singh and his demise in 1862 A.D. By its next chapter (23) *The Tawarikh* covers the *Kuka Lehar* in its new phase from the year 1866 to 1869 A.D. It needs to be noticed that the works of M.L.Ahluwalia, Fauja Singh, and the Documents edited by Nahar Singh and Kirpal Singh have their impact upon the author of *Tawarikh*.⁷

Interestingly, Kasel says that the news of death of Balak Singh reached Baba Ram Singh while he was going to Hazro but was in the village named Mutherrahe, Amritsar region.⁸ In fact Balak Singh had despatched his *Ardas* to Baba Ram Singh and it reached him along with the news of his demise. Balak Singh had addressed Ram Singh Ji as the Thakur Ji.

Tawarikh further discloses that there was Baba Jamit Singh of village Gill in Majha, and he was an old soldier but companion of Baba Ram Singh. The two had taken *nam dan* from Satguru Balak Singh in the year 1841 A.D. In chapter no. 21 of the book there is a quotation presented through Baba Ram Singh, and it reads : 'Remember the *Bani* and perform religious hymns' because this was the order of Satguru Balak Singh, and 'I am merely his *Ruptia* or reporter'.⁹ Baba Ram Singh confessed that there was the practice of dealing with Balak Singh who was believed to be a *Patshah* and addressed as Guru Balak Singh while 'I was only a reporter in his behalf'.¹⁰

The final dialogue between Balak Singh and Ram Singh has been referred to by Inder Singh Chakervarti also. It shows that Baba Ram Singh addressed Balak Singh by calling him as '*Sache Patshah Ji*'. Balak Singh declared that *Nirankar* would bless his *Sangat* with the leadership of Baba Ram Singh during the days to come for the *Sangat* should know that *nam dan* was given to it by him.¹¹

Tawarikh takes April 12, 1857 as a historic day due to *Vaisakhi*, and the holy-day as Baba Ram Singh had created the *Sant Khalsa* on this day. This is how the chapter 21 begins. Significantly, the same chapter comes to an end by a quote from

6. See, Kasel, *op. cit.*, pp. 500-538.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 582-631.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 543.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 530.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 531.

11. *Ibid.*

Gyani Gian Singh. The book under consideration shows clearly that Baba Ram Singh was the successor to Balak Singh who had established many branches or *Manjies* at various places.¹² *Tawarikh* quotes Nahar Singh to show that Baba Ram Singh was baptized by Baba Jawahir Singh, and he had reformed the Sikh *Maryada* in order to adopt it himself and for his own family.¹³ *Tawarikh* itself says that Baba Ram Singh was determined in 1858 to see Balak Singh in Hazro.¹⁴ Kasel does it so as he had relied upon *Satguru Bilas Bhag Pehla*.

Shah Muhammad in his *Var* had referred in detail to the march of Sikh armies including the forces of their allies moving against the British. He has glorified the regions of *Majha*, *Doaba* and the Kangra Hills for their bravery as the warriors. Even the artillery under Mazhar Ali and Magha Khan had been praised.¹⁵ The *Var* further says that the egoistic soldiers crossed the two rivers to enter the Eastern zone of Punjab. They marched to Ferozepur and went beyond it. Doing so they abandoned Lahore.

The disturbances that were taking place in Lahore was not the concern of Shah Muhammad alone. Baba Ram Singh was aware of these disturbing events. The events had made him anxious.¹⁶ Every Sikh regiment was engaged again and again in performing *Ardas* that requested the Almighty God to grant them a success in the battle-field. Known as the Regiment of *Bhagats*, Baba Ram Singh's own regiment had asked him to conduct an *Ardas* for itself. He attempted it. Also he warned his regiment that it should not be misled by its rulers because it might face a defeat in the coming war. He himself threw his gun in the river, and did not cross the rivers.

Tawarikh reinforces the arguments of Shah Muhammad about the offensive nature of Sikh armies. Moreover, it tries to correct Fauja Singh's argument that 'the Khalsa nationalism' of Baba Ram Singh was rooted not so much in the ideas of Balak Singh as it was inspired by the anti-British activities of Bhai Maharaj Singh.¹⁷

Inappropriate understanding of relationship between Balak Singh and Baba Ram Singh was not confined to Fauja Singh alone. Prithipal Singh Kapur writes that Bhagat Jawahir Mal was the preceptor of Balak Singh and "who again earned fame by granting *nam dan* to Baba Ram Singh, founder of the Namdhari Sikhs (*Kukas*).¹⁸ Likewise, Kapur Singh repeats what chapter no. 3 of *Vithya* says: This chapter of *Vithya* has been entitled as 'Meeting Baba Balak Singh'. According to Ganda Singh this meeting took place in *Sammat* 1898 i.e. in 1841 A.D. Ganda Singh further says that Baba Ram Singh's *Ardas* no. 23 confesses that the Baba had received *nam dan* from Bhai Balak Singh.¹⁹ Ganda Singh is wrong here because *Ardas* 23 does not say so. He is further in fault when he maintains that Baba Ram

12. *Ibid.*, p. 511.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 518.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 529.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 431-32.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 433.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 511.

18. Prithipal Singh Kapur (ed.), *The Sikh Martyrs*, New Delhi, 2006, p. 81.

19. See Ganda Singh, *Vithya*, op. cit., p.10.

Singh had left Ludhiana in 1858 in order to reach Hazro. According to Ganda Singh Baba Ram Singh adopted his title of '*Bhai*' in 1860 A.D.²⁰ For this information Ganda Singh has relied upon a police report entitled as 'A Brief Account'.

Vithya also refers to a letter of Baba Ram Singh written during September-October, 1865 A.D. to Hira Nand S/o Jawahir Mal.²¹ The letter says that the British Administration was gathering its information about the Namdharis through the police and its spies who were Sikh priests and Brahmins.²² Actually, the Administration did not realize that Baba Ram Singh's organization was committed to 'devotion alone'. Hira Nand was expected to free the Kukas from the police informers, concludes the letter of Baba Ram Singh.

More than *Vithya* and its author Ganda Singh, it is the book of Jaswinder Singh that deserves greater attention. It is entitled as *Hukamname Satguru Ram Singh Ji*, and it came out in the year 1999.²³ Before seeing it, it will be important to examine J.S.Grewal and W.H.McLeod. These two scholars seldom go beyond the *Vithya*, or the work of Nahar Singh.²⁴ In this way the police sources emerge stronger by their approach or methodology.

J.S.Grewal²⁵ writes that many followers of Ram Singh did believe in the veracity of *Sau Sakhi*, and it stood for the end of British rule. This prophecy was known to the British in 1863 itself, says Grewal. This Sikh historian further writes that Baba Ram Singh was 'a disciple of Balak Singh' though he had given a new orientation and direction to his reformation by "instituting the Sant Khalsa in 1862, the year of Baba Balak Singh's death".

In 1973 it was W.H.McLeod²⁶ who discussed his three theories to reveal the life and practice of Baba Ram Singh. McLeod described the Kukas as a Millionarian Sect of the Punjab. It was anti-British as noticed by both the Administration and the Nationalist historians such as Fauja Singh and M.L.Ahluwalia. McLeod had also used the police reports to present the social or caste composition of the Kukas by the year 1871. He has also translated a portion of *Sau Sakhi*. For McLeod *Sakhi* meant Testimony. Unlike him, Ganda Singh writes that a *Sakhi* included in *Sau Sakhi* refers to Baba Ram Singh and his father by their Names.²⁷ Hence, it shows only the evolution of *Sau Sakhi* under the British rule.

Let us turn to Jaswinder Singh and Swaran Singh Virk. *Hukamname of Satguru Ram Singh Ji* have been dealt with by Dr. Navtej Singh and Dr. K.S.Bajwa. Dr. Navtej Singh used these *Hukamnamas* to construct the history of Kukas. Dr. Bajwa has shown their relevance to demonstrate the Namdhari 'Beliefs and

20. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

23. Jaswinder Singh, *Hukamname Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji*, Bhaini Sahib, 1999, pp. 99-538.

24. Nahar Singh (ed.), *Gooroo Ram Singh and the Kuka Sikhs*, New Delhi, 1965.

25. J.S.Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab*, Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 128-144.

26. W.H.McLeod, *Exploring Sikhism*, Oxford, New Delhi, 2000, pp. 189-215.

27. Ganda Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

Practices'. But, *Hukamnamas* as presented by Jaswinder Singh in 1999²⁸ can make us familiar with the depth of cultural and political views of Baba Ram Singh. One can do so by keeping the following *Hukamname* in mind :

Sr. No.	No. of Hukamnama	Contents	Pages
1	Billey - No. 03	British Administration and its information about the Namdharis	129-130
2	Historical persons like Bir Singh, Maharaj Singh etc. No. 07	Bir Singh, Dalip Singh, Jamit Singh	157-58
3	<i>Sau Sakhi</i> -No. 20	Importance of <i>Chandi Di Var</i> , Guru Gobind Singh	260-61
4	<i>Ruptia</i> or Reporter - Nos.20,25	Baba Ram Singh as a Reporter	130,418
5	<i>Majha</i> as the Mother - land - No.10	Glorification of <i>Majha</i>	178-79
6	<i>Majha</i> and Russia	Link between <i>Majha</i> , Kabul and Russia	279,375
7	Prostitution-No.47, No.48 and 45	Political degeneration of Lahore and Amritsar Sardars	401,384, 385
8	Maharaja Dalip Singh - No. 42	Condemnation of Dalip Singh for eating beef	394-95, 398-99, 369

28. Jaswinder Singh, *op. cit.*

THE GENESIS OF GADAR LEHAR

Bhupinder Singh*

The revolt of 1857 of the Indian people against the British Empire was a landmark in the history of freedom struggle of India, though it was crushed mercilessly and ferociously. After this revolt, the British Empire did not fall, but the East India Company had to go. The British Crown took over direct rule of India.

The Britishers used its (India's) fertile land, natural resources and human energy for the development of England rather than that of the Indian people. The Britishers destroyed old Indian economic system and started a new capitalist system. The strategy which the British Government pursued for the development of agriculture released forces that increased exploitation of the small and middle peasantry. Britishers took over Punjab in 1849. Hence Punjab could not escape from this transformation. Though new sources of irrigation and nationwide demand of grains brought some prosperity, yet the economic condition of Punjab peasants had worsened during the second half of the 19th century because of the increased land revenue, heavy indirect taxes, moneylender's debts and fragmentation of land holdings.¹ The prices of land increased. Commercialization led to the transfer of land from peasants to the moneylenders. For example 4 lakh 15 thousand acre land stood sold between 1901 to 1909 while approximately more than 2.5 crore acre land had been mortgaged.² In 1900, Government had to pass the land alienation act to stop overtaking the land by non-cultivators, but this law could not stop the overtaking. This had brought into existence a new class of moneylenders-cum-rich farmers in the region.

The century also witnessed diseases like plague, small pox, cholera etc. During the period between 1850 and 1900 twenty five famines occurred in the country.³ The Lieutenant Governor of Punjab lamented in one of his reports of 1907 to the Governor General of India that plague alone had killed 60,000 Punjabis a week.⁴

The wave of immigration from rural areas of Central Punjab to North America started under these conditions of economic distress at the beginning of 20th century. In the beginning, the Punjabis were recruited in the British police and taken to

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1. Josh, Sohan Singh, *Hindustan Gadar Party - A Short History*, Vol. I, People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1977, p. 33.
2. Sainsara, Gurcharan Singh, *Gadar Party Da Itihas*, Desh Bhagat Yadgar Committee, Jalandhar, 1961, p. 14.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
4. Puri, Harish K. *Gadar Movement - Ideology, Organization, Strategy*, G.N.D. University, Amritsar, 1993, p.16.

Malaya, Singapore, Penang etc. by the British officers.⁵ British imperialists took some Indians to islands of East Indies, Burma, and China to watch their business and homes by making them policemen, watchmen and Gatekeepers etc.⁶ In the ports of Singapore, Malaya, Penang and Shanghai passengers and sailors from Canada and America were used to talk about the prosperity of their own countries. The attraction of earning more money and bettering their lives drew them to Canada and America, and they began to go to the British white colony of Canada and the free America.

Wages in Canada were more than ten times so called salary of an Indian soldier in the British Army and five to six times higher than that in Malaya, Hongkong and Shanghai. Little wonder, Indians in South Asia asked their relatives to come to these countries as soon as possible. According to an official estimate of America and Canada the first batch of Indian immigrants arrived in America between 1895 to 1900.⁷ According to Mackenzie King's report submitted to Dominion Parliament in 1908 the first of the Indians to come were induced by agents of Canadian pacific company.⁸ Some Sikh soldiers went to England in 1897 to participate in Diamond Jubilee celebrations and passed through Canada while returning back. Some of them, however, choose to stay back. They were attracted by the progress and natural beauty of that land. Soon a number of Punjabi immigrants went to Canada and America from Malaya, Singapore, Hongkong and other ports like Philippines, Australia, Newzeland and Fizi. All these immigrants came mainly from the five districts of Punjab, the largest number coming from the Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur.⁹ Over 75% of them were Sikhs and of them around 50% were ex-soldiers who had served in the British Army.¹⁰ Indians were physically well built but mostly unskilled workers and could take up any job offered to them. Most of them began to work in lumber mills, cleared the wild land, railway construction works, clearing of land and repair of tram lines, dairying, fruit packing and other kinds of farming. In the beginning, number of immigrant Indians in Canada was less but it soon picked up. The result of this was that in 1905 the number of Indians who went to Canada was 45, in 1908 it became 2623.¹¹ The climate of British Columbia was like that of Punjab with the only difference that it was less hot there. They therefore did not find it difficult to make themselves at homes and settle down there.

In the beginning, the Indian immigrants preferred to settle down in Canada than in America because Canada was a British colony and they were British subjects. Also there was less demand for labour in America. However, there was an increased racial discrimination in Canada. But the weather of pacific ocean was more suitable for them, so Indians began to go to America instead of Canada. A number of

5. Josh, Sohan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

6. Sainsara, Gurcharan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

7. Jagjit Singh, *Gadar Party Lehar*, Navyug Publishers, Delhi, 1979, p. 15.

8. Puri, Harish, K., *op. cit.*, p. 17.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Majitha, Ram Singh, *Hindustan Di Azadi Di Larai Vich Punjab*, Punjab Freedom Fighter Organization, Moga, n.d. p. 101.

Indians in Canada shifted to America. After some time Canadian Government made a law against Indians to stop this shifting because after 1907-08 Indians invariably preferred to go to America instead of Canada. It is not possible to guess the numbers of Indians who went to America. But according to American census report in 1913 the total number of Indians was 5000.¹² A few of them were students and belonged to all parts of country, but 90% of them were Punjabi farmers who worked in fields and factories. Indian students who went to America belonged to low middle class families. To meet their overhead expenses, they did physical work. Indian labourers were employed on the west pacific railway line, some of them worked in iron mills and some persons worked in agricultural fields because basically they were farmers.

The free environment of America influenced the Indians. They were much influenced by the Irish patriots, who were also the enemies of Britishers. Indians faced taunting witticism everywhere as they were not free. Whenever, America faced economic crisis, her Government blamed Indians for this crisis. During the crisis they physically attacked the Indians. The first riots took place at Bellingham state of Washington and spread to other towns and cities of America and Canada.¹³ American workers took part in these anti-Indian riots. The main accusation against Indians was that they were the cause of their reduced wages. All this gave a strong jerk to Indian labourers because this charge was not verified, it was not even enquired into by American Government.

All these incidents made the Indians aware of their political slavery and they joined together for their independence. In 1906, Tarakh Nath Das and Ram Nath Puri had published a pamphlet '*Circular-e-Azadi*', which asked the Indians to boycott the English goods and leave the job of British police and Army. In 1909, another pamphlet was published named '*Maro Frangi Ko*' and it was distributed and sent to India.¹⁴ In California, at Stockton, Bhai Jawala Singh, Santokh Singh, Wasakha Singh and Hazara Singh together took Hotelwill farm at lease. Here, they gave jobs or work to Indians in distress and they helped them in that way.

There were three big centres or the colonies where Indians lived and worked. These were at California's state Sanfrancisco and around it, 2nd at the river Columbia between the states of Oragan and Washington and cities of Saint John, Portland, Seattle, Astoria and the third one was at Vancouver, Victoria of Columbia and west Manchester city and the adjoining areas.¹⁵

In beginning, it were the Indian workers in Canada who made more progress in Societal organization than the Indian labourers in America. The credit for this went to Prof. Teja Singh. A large number of Indian labourers in America and Canada was Sikhs and many of them were influenced by the Singh Sabha movement. In 1907, 'Khalsa Diwan Society' was established in Vancouver. Its objectives were related to religious education and brotherhood. This society built a Gurdwara in Vancouver by spending nearly 25,000 dollars.¹⁶ It was also a time when Sh. Jawala Singh and

12. Jagjit Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

13. Josh, Sohan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

14. Sainsara, Gurcharan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

16. Jagjit Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

Sant Wasakha Singh established the 'Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society' in America and built a Gurdwara in Stockton. These Gurdwaras became the centres of religious activities of Indians but soon they became centres for political actions as well.

In 1909, the 'Hindustan Association' was formed at Vancouver. Bhai Bhag Singh was the President of this Association, G.D. Kumar was the Secretary and Bhai Balwant Singh was the treasurer. This organization published a newspaper named '*Sawdesh Sewak*' in Urdu. Its editor was G.D. Kumar. But in May 1911, this society split into many parts due to the internal conflicts among its leaders.¹⁷

The rise of the political struggle of Indians took place in the American islands and Canada. The real cause of this struggle was race or discrimination based on colour of skin. But it also expressed itself through the other forms. Most of Indians settled in Canada were owners of rich (fertile) land and shops. The more rich and narrow minded Canadian nationalists refused to accept them as their equals. For these reasons, the social tension between the two came over the surface. Soon these racial and economic issues took anti-Government turn both in Canada and America where these two Governments sought to curtail and stop the entry of Indians in their countries. It was seen as an attempt to isolate them from their kith and kins by the Indians.

By the end of 1907, there were strikes against Asians in Vancouver. An angry crowd destroyed a huge part of properties of Asians. In the same year, on the diplomatic initiative of Canada the Privy Council passed the order no. 920. According to this, the landing in Canada of immigrants who came otherwise than by a continuous journey from the country of which they were natives or citizens was prohibited. By a further order in council of 3rd June 1908 Asiatic immigrants were required to have in their possession at least 200 dollars on arrival at Canada.¹⁸ Since there was not any direct ship service to Canada, so the result of this order was that entry of Indians in Canada stood practically totally banned. In 1911, 11932 Chinese and 2986 Japanese entered Canada but during this period only one Indian was permitted to settle down in Canada.¹⁹

Attempts were made to expel those Indians who had already settled down in Canada. It was purposed that the Indians living in Canada should be sent to Honduras Island. The Canadian Government offered them to pay their expenses. The Ottawa Government sent an officer Mr. Hopkinsin to Vancouver for this purpose. The purpose of the official scheme was simply to get rid of the Indians. The latter saw through the intrigue and refused to buy it.

The Indians decided to seek help from India and England. A deputation to the Governments of Canada, England and India was sent to make them aware of their problems. The Gurdwara of Vancouver became a centre of movement. In December 1911, United India League was established by replacing Hindustan Association to make the movement free from communal aspects. Hussan Rahim was its President and Raja Singh was its Secretary but the centre of this League was also Gurdwara

17. Sainsara, Gurcharan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

18. Puri, Harish K., *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34.

19. Jagjit Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

of Vancouver. This League published the paper '*Hindustan*' in English.²⁰ On 14 June 1913 another newspaper named '*Sansar*' came out. Its editor was Dr. Sunder Singh.²¹

By way of consolidating their position the Indians decided to bring their families to Canada under the leadership of 'Khalsa Diwan Society' and Hindustan Association. Keeping this purpose in focus the President of Khalsa Diwan Society, Bhai Bhag Singh and Bhai Balwant Singh *Granthi* went to Punjab to bring their families in Canada.

On 17th May 1911 Bhai Bhag Singh and Bhai Balwant Singh, while in Calcutta sent a telegram to the Viceroy of India complaining that the shipping company of Calcutta was not issuing them the direct ticket to Canada. In reply, the Indian Government expressed their helplessness and gave a suggestion that they should seek permission directly from the Canadian Government.²² But the Canadian Government also did not give any positive response to their telegram and they went to Hongkong and from where they travelled in a ship which was going to Sanfrancisco through Canada. But when they arrived at Vancouver the authorities did not allow their families to enter in Canada. Indians tried every legal way to acquire entrance to Canada but the Canadian Government was not ready to grant any permission. Finally, the issue was temporarily settled when the Indian families were allowed to enter Canada by giving the security and they also went to the Court to legalise their claim. The Khalsa Diwan Society and United India League met together and decided to send a deputation to the Ottawa Government on 15 December 1911 to get their grievances redressed.²³ They elected four delegates for this purpose, names of delegates were Prof. Teja Singh, Rev. L.W. Hall, a missionary, S. Raja Singh and Dr. Sunder Singh. The demands made by this deputation were that the Indians should be permitted to bring their families in Canada and the terms and conditions to enter in Canada should be equal for all irrespective of the nationality. This deputation reaffirmed the loyalty of Punjabis towards the British Government. In spite of all this the whole move proved to be a failure.

Waiting for more than a year the Indians of Canada got together in a meeting which was held in the Dominion Hall and in which it was decided that one more deputation would be sent both to Indian Government and to the British Government. The prominent members of this deputation were Shri Balwant Singh, Narain Singh and Nand Singh Sihra. On 14 March 1913, it left for England.²⁴ The deputation reached London in the 1st week of April 1913.²⁵ After the arrival of this deputation in England, the deputation requested permission to see minister Mr. Lewis Harcourt but he refused to meet the deputation.²⁶ In England the deputation had meetings

20. Sainsara, Gurcharan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

21. Jagjit Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

22. Sainsara, Gurcharan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

23. Josh, Sohan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

24. Bilga, Bhagat Singh, *Gadar Lehar De Unfole Verke* (Punjabi), Desh Bhagat Yadgar Hall, Jalandhar, 1989, p. 25.

25. Josh, Sohan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

26. Josh, Sohan Singh, *Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna : Life of the founder of Gadar Party*, People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1970, p. 21.

with Sir William Vaderburn, Sir Henry Kotten, Sir Manchar Ji Bhawnagri, Sir K.G. Gupta, another minister of colonial department and some members of Parliament in England.²⁷ One of them took place in Kakhsan Hall of Cambridge which was Presided over by Sir Manchar Ji Bhawnagri. In these meetings many resolutions supporting the deputationists were passed and sent to various newspapers.

After this, the deputation came to India. On reaching India it sought support of the Indian Press and Political organizations and met the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab and Governor General of India.²⁸ But the effort made by this deputation went in vain as it exercised no influence over the attitude of British Government. Finally, this deputation went back to Hong-Kong in April 1914. But even being a failure it made the people of India aware about the struggle that was going on in other countries.

In that way the attitude of the Canadian Government towards the Indian immigrants compelled them to deviate from the legal procedure. Their faith in the Canadian Government for justice got evaporated.

The situation was ripe now to take the next step. Everybody was feeling the necessity for it. For this purpose they formed various organizations. In July 1912, the Indian workers in different saw mills met in Portland and decided to set up an organization called the 'Pacific Coast Hindi Association'. To open its office in a rented house in Portland, Bhai Sohan Singh Bhakna was elected its President, Babu G.D. Kumar its General Secretary and Pandit Kanshi Ram its Treasurer.²⁹ It was also decided to start a weekly newspaper named '*Hindustan*' in Urdu.

In the winter of 1912 the Monarak Mill got closed down for a month. Bhai Sohan Singh Bhakna and Uddham Singh Kasel went to Bhai Kesar Singh Thathgarh in Astoria. Afterwards the "Pacific Coast of Hindi Association" was established there. Bhai Kesar Singh was elected as the President, Munshi Karim Bakhsh as Secretary and Munshi Ram was its Treasurer, this organization was made branch of Portland Association.³⁰

Bhagwan Singh came to Vancouver in the end of 1912 or in the beginning of 1913. He had been a Sikh priest in the Gurdwaras at Perak in the Federated Malaya states and at Hong-Kong, and was an 'orator of great merit'.³¹ His arrival gave rise to a series of lectures against the British Empire. At the same time Lala Hardayal reached Sanfrancisco (America) in January 1911. He had visited many countries before his arrival in America. In February 1912 he was appointed professor of Indian Philosophy and Sanskrit at the Leyland Stanford University. But in September of the same year he resigned his post and returned to Berkeley to take up revolutionary work.³² After arriving at Sanfrancisco he delivered lectures on atheism and organized the Indians.

27. Jagjit Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

28. Puri, Harish K., *op. cit.*, p. 56.

29. Josh, Sohan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

30. Deol, Gurdev Singh, *The Role of the Gadar Movement in the National Movement*, Sterling Publishers, Jalandhar, 1969, pp. 56, 57.

31. Puri, Harish, K., *op. cit.*, p. 58.

32. Josh, Sohan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

On every Sunday, the meetings of the 'Pacific Coast of Hindi Association' were being held. After fourth or fifth meeting, Sh. G.D. Kumar got ill and it led to a discontinuity in the publication of the '*Hindustan*' and holding of meetings. In these days, Lala Thakur Das was in Portland and he advised the President of the 'Pacific Coast Hindi Association', Sohan Singh Bhakna that he should send for Lala Hardayal from California. He wrote a letter to Lala Hardayal and he agreed to come along with Bhai Parmanand Lahori, who was a self-exiled Arya missionary from Lahore. They reached St. John on 25th March 1913.³³ Lala Hardayal gave advise to the people present in the meeting that they should work on revolutionary lines to make India free. He proposed that a weekly paper named "*Gadar*" in Urdu as well as in Punjabi be started to preach revolutionary ideas among Indians in order to make preparation for freeing India from British imperialism. The headquarter of the *Gadar* was to be called "*Yugantar Ashram*" which was to be established at San Francisco.³⁴

For the establishment of Central Organization several meetings were held at Bridalveil, Linton, Washington and some other cities. For this purpose on 21st April 1913, a meeting was held at the centre of Bhai Kesar Singh's lumber mill in Astoria, in which the leaders of Bridalveil, Portland, Viana, St. John and Linton also participated.³⁵ The meeting was addressed by Lala Hardayal and other prominent leaders. A huge fund was collected and a committee was established to collect more funds. The society of revolutionaries was named as "Hindi Association of Pacific Coast" and the press was named as *Yugantar Ashram*. Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna was the first President of this organization, Lala Hardayal was its Secretary; Kesar Singh Thathgarh was Vice President, Pandit Kanshi Ram was Treasurer and Harnam Singh Assistant Treasurer.³⁶

Sohan Singh Bhakna, Hardayal and Kanshi Ram were elected members of the Commission to carry on confidential and secret work of the party.³⁷ This organization published '*Gadar*' newspaper on first November 1913 in Urdu, that is why it came to be called as '*Gadar Party of Hindustan*'.

The objectives of the *Gadar* movement was to make India free by violent means, to establish a system of self Government in India based on the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity and to work for a social order securing the greatest good of the greatest number.³⁸ The slogan of this organization was "*Bande Matram*".

33. Josh, Sohan Singh, *Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, op. cit.*, p. 26.

34. Josh, Sohan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

35. Sainsara, Gurcharan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

36. Josh, Sohan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

38. Deol, Gurdev Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

SOCIAL CRISIS OF THE PUNJAB FARMERS : CAN RELIGIOUS ETHICS PLAY A ROLE IN RESOLVING CRISIS ?

*Joginder Singh**

The small and marginal farmers which constitute 45 per cent of the Punjab agriculturist families, are in the thick of socio-economic crisis due to increasing volume of their indebtedness and forcing them to commit suicides since 1990. In terms of number of suicide cases, the Punjab farmers are next to the farmers of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh etc. An in-depth study of the causes and circumstances leading to this crisis has been conducted. In May 2008, the Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana conducted a survey of two districts—Sangrur and Bathinda of Punjab. According to its report, 2,990 farmers (1256 in District Bathinda and 1634 in District Sangrur) committed suicides. The basic reason of their committing suicide was their inability to pay back the debt taken from the *Sahukars* (moneylenders). The average amount of the debt incurred by the small farmers (738) of District Sangrur was Rs. 3.36 lakh. Three hundred fifty three out of 738 farmers were those who had to sell of their land holdings worth of Rs.19.05 crore. Among them 58 families were those who sold agricultural machinery and implements for the same reason. The average amount of debt of 550 families of District Bathinda is Rs.2.94 lakh who were unable to clear of this amount. Two hundred twenty three families of this district were those who owned average amount of debt Rs.85,825. According to the NSSO survey, the amount of debt of each farmer of Punjab is Rs.415,76 whereas the amount of similar debt in rest of the country is Rs.12505. Similar survey has also been conducted by the Economics Department of Punjabi University, Patiala. Principal Investigator, Prof Ranjit Singh Ghuman gave the following table of those farmers of four districts who were in depression and required psychological counseling.²

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1. Surinder Singh, *Kisan-Khudkushian*, Jalandhar Book Shop, Jalandhar, 2009, pp. 45, 89.
2. Cited in Surinder Singh, *Kisan-Khudkushian*, Jalandhar Book Shop, Jalandhar, 2009, p.48; according to Hophington report dated April 22, 2009, the National Crime Records Bureau of India recorded 182,936 cases of suicides committed by the farmers from 1997 to 2007. In 2007 alone, 16625 farmers committed suicides.

Period	Sangrur	Mansa	Bathinda	Ferozepur
2002-06	386	125	177	20
1998-01	256	91	136	11
1992-97	265	131	150	12
Total	907	347	463	43

The most dismal picture of the Punjab farmers committing suicides has been brought out by social activist Inderjit Singh Jeji, Convener, Movement Against State Repression. According to his survey, 3000 farmers commit suicides annually. The Punjab Government rejected these statistics. According to its own report, only 2116 committed suicides from 1998 to 2004. However, the Punjab Farmers' Commission mentions that 2000 farmers commit suicides annually.

There has been a big difference of opinion regarding the causes and circumstances which force the peasants to take loans and credits from the registered as well as non-registered agencies and as a consequence they commit suicides. It is argued that the Green Revolution entrapped the farmers in the system of increasing the production to the level of its commercialization and its marketing. It was only possible through the tractorization of the agriculture, installing tubewells, using high-yielding varieties of the seeds and fertilizers, harvesting combines or machines, storing and marketing. As a result, the cost of inputs multiplied beyond the capacity of the farmers, particularly in the wake of low returns. "To increase this gap between returns and input costs, the farmers resorted to more intensive use of divisible inputs, which made the farming more competitive and capital demanding. The farmers, especially the small and marginal farmers, were left with no other option than to take loans and credit for this purpose."⁴

The cash-starved farmers took loans and credit for :- (a) running tubewells, tractors, harvesting combines and other inputs like seeds, plant protection measures. In terms of the use of the machinery and fertilizer consumption, the Punjab farmers are ahead of their counterparts in India. The volume of loans and credit taken from registered and unregistered institutions ran to the tune of Rs. 10,000 crores on which the annual interest burden is to the extent of about Rs. 1900 crores. The bulk of the loans were arranged from commission agents and moneylenders, which is estimated to be about Rs. 5500 crores. (b) Another variable responsible for indebting the farmers was the result of raising of standard of living. The construction of *pacca* but spacious houses fitted with modern facilities, use of fans, Air Coolers, Air Conditioners and motors, colour televisions, bikes, jeeps and cars became symbols of social status. (c) The cost of ostentatious life multiplied and the farmers became spendthrift in terms of organizing social ceremonies principally birth, marriage and death on big scale.

3. *Op.Cit.*, pp. 68-69.

4. T.S. Chahal, *Forced Fall: A Case of Punjab Farmers*, Institution of Development and Planning, Amritsar, 2005.

According to the recent survey conducted by a Delhi based feminist and frontal farmer union, it is dowry, not low returns which force the farmers to commit suicides. According to this survey, 'it has been found that 74 per cent of the families where suicides took place were indebted largely owing to the need to dowry or other social responsibilities.' The minimum dowry expected from the Jat Sikhs is rupees 2 lac and rupees 60,000 among the landless peasants. The women of the affected families frankly admit that the girls were viewed as a liability. "Based on a discreet survey of 125 suicide-affected families in 47 villages in Ferozepur, Muktsar, Bathinda, Moga, Mansa, Sangrur, Patiala, Ludhiana, Barnala and Faridkot districts, the study titled 'Impact of agrarian crisis on peasant women' has found that the majority of small and marginal farmers took loans for agricultural or other purposes, but ended up using the money to pay for dowry or medical expenses.

While 46 per cent of the widows acknowledged using loan amounts for dowry or weddings of daughters, 36 per cent said the money was used for treatment of family members ailing from diseases like gallbladder stones, hysterectomies, eye surgeries, hernia or cancer.

The majority of suicides in the Malwa — a region most affected by the agrarian crisis — were 'directly or indirectly' linked to social obligations."⁵

II

Towards Resolving the Crisis

It has been admitted by the economists that farmers get trapped in the vicious cycle of debt as they divert loans to non-agricultural purposes particularly social obligations. It has been found that the farmers take money from private moneylenders for weddings or other non-agricultural needs. When they fail to repay, they take more loans from banks in the name of tractor or crops. The trap invariably ends only when farmers end their lives.⁶ The economists, social activists and State policy makers are constantly engaged in the exercise of resolving the social crisis of the peasantry. It is advocated that the religious and welfare organizations, non-government organizations, local bodies, religious and welfare organizations and educational societies can play a constructive role in terms of helping the victim farmer families through:⁷

- a) immediate food/clothing/financial help. b) adopting families including children of the deceased farmers. c) even adopting districts/blocks/villages as per their capacity. d) providing free education and scholarship to the victim families. e) giving moral support and guidance to the family members of the deceased. f) generating job avenues for the wards of the deceased farmers.

5. Cited in *Hindustan Times*, Chandigarh, October 2009, pp 1-2. The Principal Investigator of this Survey is Ranjana Padhi, who has extensively published her work on issues of urban workers and displaced families. She undertook the study in Punjab in association with farm unions, including the BKU Ekta (Ugrahan), Punjab Kisan Union and the BKU Ekta (Dakonda). The study sample comprised 40 percent *Dalits* and rest of the small and marginal farm families.
6. *Op. Cit.*, p 2: An observation of Dr. S.S. Johal, farm economist and former Vice-Chancellor of Punjabi University, Patiala.
7. T.S. Chahal, *Forced Fall: A Case of Punjab Farmers*, Institute of Development & Planning, Amritsar, 2005, p.85.

Although these are laudable remedial measures yet there is need to save the farmers taking the extreme step of eliminating themselves. The change in the lifestyle, curtailing the expenditure on the social ceremonies and liberating from the alcohols and drugs are some of the factors which can certainly be helpful to these farmers. It is this area that the religious ethics can play a role. Since majority of the Punjab farmers happen to be the Sikhs, a brief note on the ethics of Sikhism is relevant to mention here. The ten Sikh Gurus perceived this world a social reality, not *maya* (illusion). For leading a social life, they evolved ethics for an individual as well as corporate life.⁸ "Sikh ethics are based upon three fundamental concepts— first, that the principles *kirt karo*, *nam japo* and *vand chhako* (work, worship and charity) should dominate one's complete life. Second, that self-reliance (*haumai*) is the great enemy of God realization and that it manifests itself in the five evils of lust, anger, greed, materialism and pride. Activities which result from any of these vices should be avoided. This is best done by practicing the virtues of contentment, patience, the service of others and humility, which is considered to be the lynchpin of them all. Guru Nanak once remarked, 'Sweetness and humility are the essence of all virtues (AG,470)'.⁹ It was as early as 1945 that Codes of Practices were standardized by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee for the Sikhs. This document was known as *Sikh Rahit Maryada* (a guide to the Sikh way of life). The text of this document has been divided into two sections, namely personal conduct (*shakhasi rahini*) and corporate or 'panthic' conduct (*panthak rahini*). The two sections are further sub-divided.¹⁰ Since the text of this

8. Daljeet Singh, *The Sikh Ideology*, Singh Brothers, Mai Sewan, Amritsar, 1970, p.18.

9. W. Owen Cole & Piara Singh Sambhi, *Sikhism: Beliefs and Practices*, Adarsh Books, New Delhi, 1999, p.142.

10. W.H. McLeod, *Sikhs of the Khalsa*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2005, pp.179-180.

I. Personal conduct

1. Devotion to the Divine Name

- 1.1 Scripture appointed for regular recitation. The text for *Ardas* (the Khalsa Prayer).
- 1.2 The Gurdwara.
- 1.3 *Kirtan*.
- 1.4 Taking a *hukam*.
- 1.5 Ordinary reading of the *Guru Granth Sahib* (*sadharan path*)
- 1.6 Unbroken reading (*akhand path*)
- 1.7 Beginning a complete reading of the *Guru Granth Sahib*.
- 1.8 The conclusion of a complete reading (*bhog*).
- 1.9 *Karah Prasad*.

2. Living according to the Gurus' teachings (*gurmat di rahini*)

- 2.1 General rules of conduct.
- 2.2 Birth and name-giving ceremony.
- 2.3 Marriage (*anand sanskar*).
- 2.4 Funeral obsequies.
- 2.5 Other ceremonies (entering new house, opening new shop, etc.).

3. Service (*seva*).

Particular service performed in a gurdwara.

II. Panthic conduct.

1. *Guru Panth*.
2. Initiation (*amrit sanskar*).
3. The administering of penances (*tanakhah*) to offenders.
4. The issuing of a *gurmata*.
5. Appeals against congregational decision.

English editions of the manual have been published privately in London in 1971 (Kanwaljit Kaur & Inderjit Singh, 1971), and officially by the SGPC in 1978.

maryada is comprehensive we will only cite its those aspects which are helpful to an individual economically, socially and psychologically. Sikhism being monotheism rejects Brahmanical rituals and customs. The *Sikh Rahit Maryada* exhorts the Sikhs to observe simple *janam* (birth), *anand* (marriage) and *mirtak* (death) *sanskars* as follow: the birth of boy or girl is welcomed equally as a gift of God. When the mother is well enough, the family visits Gurdwara to give thanks, offers one-and a quarter rupees (*sava*) for making *Karah Prasad* (sacramental food) and a *romalla*, a piece of brocade or silk about a meter square to the *Guru Granth Sahib* and thanks giving *shabads* are read and recited. The devout families go for administering *amrit* to the boy or girl. The *Guru Granth Sahib* is consulted by being opened at random and the first word of the left hand page is read to the parents. They decide upon a name beginning with this initial and the *granthi* (scripture reader) will announce publically, adding Kaur for a girl or Singh for a boy. "He will then cry '*Jo bole so nihal*' and the congregation will give its approval by replying '*Sat sri akal*'. The first five and the last *pauris* of the *Anand* will be read, the prayer (*Ardas*) will be offered, *karah parshad* will be shared and the ceremony is over. Where there is no Gurdwara, or the mother and child are not well enough to make the journey, or during a season of bad weather, naming may take place in the home. *Amrit* will be prepared by an elderly person and a *gutka*, a small collection of hymns, will be used instead of the *Adi Granth*."¹¹

Like the birth ceremony, the marriage ceremony known as *Anand Riti* or *Vivah* is simple. It neither recognizes caste nor social status, nor a place. It simply prescribes that "A Sikh's daughter should marry a Sikh. Child marriages are not permitted. A girl should marry only when she has attained physical and mental maturity. A formal betrothal is unnecessary but if both parties desire a token betrothal can be made by the girl's parents visiting the boy's parents on a day which has been mutually agreed. In the presence of the *Adi Granth* after *Ardas* has been said they should be presented with a *kirpan* and a *kara* for their son and a gift of sweets. A wedding may be celebrated on mutually acceptable date; looking for auspicious days or using horoscopes is contrary to Sikh belief. The tying of head bands, feigning sulking or grief, engaging professional dancers, worshipping ancestors, drinking alcohol, burning sacred fires and engaging in other practices derived from other religious traditions is contrary to Sikh belief. At the time of the marriage, the boy and his family, accompanied by no more friends and relatives than the girl and her family wish, should go to the girl's home, greet her family with the *Fateh* when they meet and then sing hymns of praise to God. Neither a girl nor a boy should be married for money."¹²

11. W. Owen Cole & Piara Singh Sambhi, pp. 118-19.

12. *Op. Cit.*, p 206: The *Anand* form of wedding may only be performed when both partners are Sikhs (*Anand Karaj* as laid down in *Rahit Maryada* has been described in the section on family life).

Sikhs should not follow the custom of refusing to eat at the home of their married daughter (This referred to the danger of imposing upon the son-in-law and his family; sometimes this is avoided by not visiting his home.).

There is no prohibition against widows or widowers remarrying if they wish. The ceremony should be the same as that of the first marriage.

Married Sikhs who have undergone initiation should encourage their partners to do likewise.

The death rituals are more simpler. "No rituals derived from other religions or of any other origin should be performed when a death occurs. A dying person should not be taken from bed and placed on the ground, as is the Hindu custom. No lamps should be burned and there should be no giving of cows. Comfort should be derived from reading the *Adi Granth* and meditating upon God. The dead, even one who dies in early infancy, should be cremated (Hindu babies are often buried). However, if facilities for cremation do not exist any other method of disposal may be used. Cremation may be carried out at any convenient time, day or night. The Five K's should be left on the dead body, which should be washed and clothed in clean garments, if possible, before being put in a coffin or placed on a bier. A close relative should light the pyre and the mourners should sing appropriate hymns from the *Adi Granth*.¹³

A variety of social customs have had been integral part of birth, marriage and death ceremonies. They are very expensive and beyond the means of the common Sikhs. To begin with the birth, the parents of the mother visit their daughter's home taking clothes and gifts for her and the mother-in-law and a turban for the father-in-law and the son-in-law. Apart from the feast, the gifts are given to the baby and the distinct relatives of the bridegroom. On this occasion, the family's friends are also honoured.

The *anand* marriage is attended by a variety of expensive social customs. The wedding ceremonies begin with the betrothal ceremony which is arranged either with the help of mediator called *vichola* or parents of bride and bridegroom themselves. In any case, they perform ceremonies of *shagun* or *roka* or *mangni* which involved exchange of gifts. The volume and quality of these gifts depend upon the social status of bride's parents. The spirit behind exchanging the gifts is the acceptance of premarital contacts and relationship. However, this spirit has been supplanted by the demands of the parents of bridegroom which comprise motorcycles, cars, domestic appliances, besides the ceremonial cloths and ornaments (golden *kara*, *mundari* and watches etc.). The preparations for the wedding ceremony are preceded by *maiyan* and *vatna*. On these occasions, the bride and the bridegroom discard their old clothes and put on their traditional dresses and adorn with a variety of ornaments. The cost of these articles run into thousands of rupees. A night prior to the departure of *barat* (marriage procession), a ceremony called *jago* procession is taken out. The women of bridegroom family and relatives wear gaudy dresses, hold lamps on their heads and are lead by the professional dancers who perform *gidha* and *Bhangra*. The procession is taken out around the streets of the villages or the *mohallas* of the towns. The charges of professional dancers again run into thousands of rupees (depending upon the prominence of the dance troupes and their charges). Besides, there are several ceremonies which conclude the wedding. Important among these are the final departure of the bride from her paternal home. This ceremony is known as *vidai*.

13. Deliberate exhibitions of grief or mourning such as the beating of breasts or screaming (to frighten away demons) are contrary to Sikh teachings. The bereaved should seek comfort and guidance in the hymns of the *Adi Granth* and try to accept God's will.

When bride reaches to her in-law's parents, again some ceremonies are performed according to the local customs. However, all these ceremonies do not incur big amount.

Perhaps the most expensive items are the hosting the *barat* and relatives. In Punjab, it is common practice to host grand-parties for the *baratis* and relatives in marriage palaces. The mere rent of these palaces vary from Rs. 20,000 to 2,00,000. In addition, the expenses on the drinks, snacks, lunch and dinners run into lacs of rupees. 'Today, rural Punjab is dotted with swanky marriage palaces while government schools and hospitals are in an abysmally poor state.' Commenting upon the outrageously ostentatious marriage celebrations, the Resident Editor of *Hindustan Times* says "the big, fat Punjabi weddings are only getting bigger, representing a socially disconcerting trend of a vulgar display of wealth. The political class of the poor-rich state has not only been in the forefront of this splurge-and-show-off trend, it has actually perfected that art of turning weddings into mammoth political soirees."¹⁴ The dowry which has lost its original sanctity and become a social evil. In Northern-India, "it was customary that the bride's family offered a voluntary gift to the groom's family in order to establish a good relationship between the two families and to provide the bride tangible assets in her new home. In the Punjab, there was a special custom of giving bedding sets as a part of the dowry."¹⁵ In fact, dowry was 'intimately interlinked with the institutions of hypergamous marriage and the inheritance of property.' Unfortunately, the dowry has ceased to be the status of the bride's family in terms of compensation of her full inheritance. Under the impact of modernization and consumer culture, the dowry has lost its moral ethos.¹⁶ It has become one of the major factors of indebtedness of bride's parents.

The studies carried on by the symbolist, structuralist and functionalist researchers show the meaning of the ritual activities on the one hand and their social utility on the other. "In many cultures weddings often employ symbols representing royalty, fertility and prosperity, as it is an exclusive event establishing socially and culturally approved relations for reproduction. In Punjabi weddings there are several items, such as different foods, clothes, ornaments, colors and seeds, which could point to these meanings if we are acquainted with the symbolic universes of people in the Punjab. In the context of an agrarian society, grains, which a newlywed bride throws over her shoulder, may signify the prosperity she wishes for her family and native home. On a structural level there are sets of symbolic acts within the ceremonies that may signify the transformational processes of the bridal couple when these acts are compared." These ceremonies assume

14. *Hindustan Times*, Chandigarh, November 19, 2009, p. 13: taking the cash capital's grandeur quotient to a new high, a local realtor has splurged on the replica of the Egyptian-themed set of Hollywood movie over 6 acres and is fetching a plane-load of Bollywood stars to add glamour of his son's gala wedding that Ludhiana may not forget so easily.

15. Kristina Myrvold, 'Wedding Ceremonies in Punjab', *Journal of Punjab Studies*, Vol. II, No. 2, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2004, p. 159.

16. *Ibid.*

more social relevance in the functioning of patriarchal society of Punjab. For instance, the bride is uprooted and separated from her native home and family requires social and psychological support for rehabilitation. "Many ceremonies include the giving of gifts and counter gifts to confirm kinship ties within the individual family as well as facilitate new relations between two families. The symbolic act of offering the groom gifts in betrothal ceremony establishes a marriage agreement that will decide and regulate interaction between old and new relatives in social life and in ceremonies to follow."¹⁷

The preceding sections of the paper clearly show that some of the rituals and ceremonies are obligatory as they hold socio-religious and cultural relevance. The Sikh leadership can certainly play an ameliorative role provided it involves a structure to enforce the Sikhs to perform ceremonies strictly according to the above mentioned Sikh *Rahit* and avoid ostentious and expensive social customs. It is the moral obligation of the *Jathedar* of the Akal Takhat, Darbar Sahib, Amritsar and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar to carry out this impending task. It is good to note that right from its inception, SGPC has been expressing its concern over the existing social discrimination against the Sikhs of backward classes and their economic backwardness. It passed several resolutions condemning the untouchability and caste-practices prevalent among the Sikhs. It appealed the Sikhs of the upper castes to be tolerant towards the untouchables as well as people of lower castes in terms of religious affairs. However, the concern of SGPC for social reform did not remain its primary priority in the post-independence period.¹⁸ However, it was seized of the growing menace of the social evils like drug-addiction and female foeticide in the last quarter of 20th century. The *Jathedar* of the Akal Takhat, being head of the temporal and spiritual affairs, has called upon the Sikhs to stop this inhuman and anti-Sikh practice of foeticide. He issued *Hukamnama* in this context. Long back, *Jathedars* of Akal Takhat, Kesgarh Sahib, Anandpur, District Ropar, showed serious concern over the problem of drug addiction and held a *Nasha Mukti* (addiction free) Conference on 17th to 19th December, 1999. The then Chief Minister, Punjab Govt. inaugurated De-Drug Addiction Centre. Since then, some of the Sikh organizations have been organizing camps for liberating Sikh youth from this evil.¹⁹ In the second week of December 2007, three Sikh organizations met in Chandigarh to deliberate on the challenges confronting the Sikh community and the state of Punjab. They identified three social problems needing immediate attention of the community. One of them was drug addiction among the youth. 'It was reported that between 40 to 60 percent of all youth in the state were addicted to one or the other drugs.'²⁰ Since SGPC and

17 Kristina Myrvold, p.166.

18. For the details of its resolution, see, *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee da Panjah Sala Itihas* (ed. Shamsheer Singh Ashok), Sikh Itihas Research Board, SGPC, Amritsar, 1998, pp.64, 71, 103, 169, 172, 199, 200, 227, 231, 247, 260.

19 For detail, see, *Gurmat Parkash*, S.G.P.C. Amritsar, November 2001; October 2003; March 2004; September 2004; July 2005; February 2006 and November 2006.

20. For detail, see, *Monthly Gurdwara Gazette*, SGPC, Amritsar, July 2007, pp.5-6, March 2008, pp. 25 – 27, May 2009, pp.5-7; Surinder S. Jodhka, "Of Babas and Deras", Seminar 581 – January 2008.

some of the seminaries (*deras*) are running a large number of health and educational institutions, there is a scope that they can evolve a system for helping the marginalized section of the society. The system may comprise the reservation of seats for the wards of marginalized section of the Sikh community in health and educational institutions and nominal tuition fee. They can also arrange free consultancy and distribute drugs and medicines on the subsidized rates. It may be pointed out here that for running the charitable hospitals, it is obligatory for them to make such provisions.²¹

The SGPC has equally been concerned about the aspirations and problems of the Sikh agriculturists. To begin with it successfully launched the Akali movement (1920-1925) for the control and management of the historical gurdwaras. Its subordinate organization the Shiromani Akali Dal mobilized the Sikh peasantry and artisans in the British Punjab as well as native Sikh states. More than 60 per cent following of this movement came from these two classes. In 1930s, Shiromani Akali Dal launched several agitations against the anti-peasant legislation of the Unionist Party. In the wake of this struggle, the SGPC was morally committed to protect the interests of Sikh peasantry and artisans. In the post-independence period the SGPC showed its concern whenever the peasantry was victimized. It expressed its sympathy with those peasants whose land holdings were severally damaged due to the construction of Nanak Sagar Dam (U.P.) in 1967.²² However, it was the Anandpur Resolution of the Shiromani Akali Dal endorsed by the SGPC President, Gurcharan Singh Tohra (October 1978). Its Resolution No. 3 showed the moral commitment of the Shiromani Akali Dal to espouse the interests of the poor and depressed section of the society and protecting the dignity of labour. It reiterated the three basic principles of Sikhism—doing honest labour, sharing the fruits of this labour, and meditation on the Lord's Name. The Shiromani Akali Dal expressed its commitment for the land reforms fixing a ceiling on 30 standard acres per family; abolishing the intermediaries providing real security of tenure to actual land tillers; distributing surplus land among the landless agricultural labourers and poor peasants, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.²³ When the *Dharamyudh Morcha* launched by Shiromani Akali Dal culminated into the Khalistan movement, this part of economic revolution took a back seat.

There are fundamental reasons which restrain main stream Sikh leadership to take initiative. To begin with, usually the rich Sikh farmers, businessmen, retired civil and police/military personnel are known for their social indulgences and

21 It is heartening to note that the hospital run by Radha Soami sect in Tehsil Beas of District Amritsar gives cost free treatment to all the patients irrespective of their religious affiliation but who lives in the radius of twenty five kilometers of that hospital.

22 Shamsher Singh Ashok (ed.), *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee da Panjab Sala Itihas*, p.376.

23 "Appendix 6, Anandpur Sahib Resolution", *A History of the Sikhs*, Volume 2, (Khushwant Singh), Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999, pp.454-55; Gurdarshan Singh Dhillon, *Truth about Punjab: S.G.P.C. White Paper*, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, 1996, pp.440-441.

unethical practices for appropriating wealth and power.²⁴ They have supplanted the Sikh virtues of contentment, patience, humility and service to the community. Their private life manifests lust, greed and materialism. Moreover, this section of the community has appropriated the control and management of the socio-religious, educational and cultural institutions of the Sikh community. The control and management of the SGPC is typical example of their appropriation.²⁵ They have transposed the pattern of their ethical values in the working of this institution and aggrandize their economic interests and electoral prospectus. The recent confrontation between the SGPC and its peasant tenants on 3rd November, 2009 adequately substantiate our argument. It is known fact that the SGPC enjoy proprietary rights of thousand acres of agriculture land which was once donated by the Sikh Sardars, Rajas and Maharajas to the Historical Gurdwaras and religious places in the pre-colonial period. The colonial rule and the Indian State recognized the proprietary rights of SGPC in perpetuity. Since the passage of Gurdwara Act 1925 and its subsequent amendment, the SGPC has been giving this land to the farmers either on lease or contract—subject to their periodical revision according to the law of the court. It is learnt that SGPC's Gurdwara at Teji Kalan alone enjoys the proprietary rights of 600 to 900 acres of land. On 3rd November, 2009, SGPC's task force (comprising retired police/ military personnel armed with rifles, guns and traditional weapons) descended on the village Khanna Chamaran, Tehsil Dera Baba Nanak, District Gurdaspur, for getting possession of a piece of land measuring 12 to 18 acres and being cultivated by Baljit Singh as a tenant of SGPC on the basis of a decree awarded in the SGPC's favour by a court of law. It is reported that the task force started ploughing his wheat-crop land with 6 tractors. When resisted by Baljit Singh alongwith his family members and group of the people of this village, the task force opened fire on them killing Baljit Singh and Hardip Singh and injuring 10 others. A case has been registered against Daulat Singh, Dilbagh Singh, Jagdeep

24 The record example of lavish and extravagant feast and parties has been set by Bikramjit Singh Majithia, Shiromani Akali Dal MLA and former Cabinet Minister, Punjab Government. He is brother-in-law of Deputy C.M., Sukhbir Singh Badal who is also President of Shiromani Akali Dal which controls SGPC. On his wedding ceremony, he organized a lavish party for hosting the guests numbering from 20,000 to 35,000. The guests were put into three categories: ordinary, VIP and VVIPs. For the later two categories, the catering was to be provided by the three-star hotels of Amritsar city. The top singer Gurdas Maan entertained the people, it is reported that it was the beginning of the wedding ceremonies : for more detail, see, *Hindustan Times*, Chandigarh, November 16, 2009, pp.1,3.

25 "In a recent empirical study of the caste background of the members of the SGPC, conducted by Narinderpal Singh, it is found that 80 per cent of its administrative posts are under the control of the Jat Sikhs, 15 per cent under other castes and only 5 percent are with the *dalit* Sikhs (*mazhabis* and *ramdasias*). All the three current secretaries of the Shiromani Committee are Jat Sikhs. Out of its six current additional secretaries three are Jat Sikhs, one is Labana Sikh and two belonged to Other Backward Castes": Ronki Ram, "Social Exclusion, Resistance and Deras: Exploring the Myth of Casteless Sikh Society in Punjab", *Economic and Political Weekly*, October 6, 2007, pp.4066-4067.

Singh, Nirmal Singh and Sukhvir Singh and against 50 unknown persons.²⁶ The correspondence of the vernacular and national papers were unanimous on the following facts: first, Baljit Singh was a tenant of SGPC and cultivating this land on the *theka* (contract) for the last 40 years. He was also *sarpanch* of his village. Second, for the last two years, SGPC was trying to evict him and others from this land through the court of law. Whereas, the deceased supported by the CPI (M) Kirti Kisan Unions was resisting their eviction and had a stay order from the court of law. Third, the deceased Baljit Singh, his family members and supporters were unarmed on the day of incidence. Fourth, the incidence 'triggered off a war of sorts between State Vidhan Sabha Speaker Nirmal Singh Kahlon and SGPC President Avtar Singh Makkar'. The former claimed that the victims were his supporters in the electoral politics. He told the press that he took this matter with Chief Minister, Parkash Singh Badal who expressed his disappointment and promised to do needful. Whereas, the President SGPC justified action of task force and rejected the demand of compensation as the deceased possessed Gurdwara's land illegally.²⁷ However, Harcharan Singh, Circle Incharge, Shiromani Akali Dal, was an eyewitness to this incidence, said that the action of the task force was unjustified. "He alleged that about a dozen persons belonging to the SGPC fired on the residents of the village instead of firing into the air. Members armed with swords and wooden sticks mercilessly beat up the unarmed residents of the village including women".²⁸ Captain Balbir Singh Bath (retd.), Shiromani Akali Dal MLA from Sri Hargobind Pur, District Gurdaspur, raised a voice against his own party and blamed SGPC representatives for the death of two farmers. He further alleged that the "members of the task force and some in the committee were working like *goondas* in trying to take control of gurdwaras run by private managements". He accused the task force for violating the law (of the land). He also criticized the partisan role of the Batala police. Meanwhile, SGPC member Gurinder Singh Shampura too held Shiromani Akali Dal responsible for the incidents for the reason that the SGPC, police and the entire state administration were controlled by the ruling party.²⁹

It is obvious that these are not ethics of Sikh religion but administrative, legal and political compulsions which determine the attitude of the mainstream Sikh

26. For detail, see, *The Tribune*, Jalandhar, November 4, 2009, p.4; *Hindustan Times*, Chandigarh, November, 2009, pp 1, 6; *The Rozana Ajit*, Jalandhar, November 4, 2009, pp. 1, 11.

27. *The Tribune*, Jalandhar, November 5, 2009, p.4; *Hindustan Times*, Chandigarh, November 5, 2009, p.2; Subsequently, Avtar Singh, President, SGPC tried to absolve himself saying that "he had gone to England and returned only on November 3. He said he had not signed any order directing the force to mobilize for Khanna Chamaran village. He added that the SGPC had got the possession warrant of the land and its men accompanied by *knungo* and *patwari* had gone to the village to take its lawful possession. He claimed that gunshots were fired from both sides." By implication of his own statement, he admitted that whosoever signed the order directing the force to mobilize was responsible for the violence: *The Tribune*, Jalandhar, November 10, 2009, p.4.

28. *The Tribune*, Jalandhar, November 4, 2009, p.4.

29. *Hindustan Times*, Chandigarh, November, 2009, p. 2.

leadership towards the small and marginal peasantry. The litigation in the case of agriculture land has become unavoidable in the sense that revision of lease or contract deeds of this category of land fetches more volume of revenue to the SGPC in the wake of increased productivity of land and its market value. Moreover, continuity of status of the peasant tenants in particular land holding strengthens their occupancy rights and deprive SGPC of its increased volume of land revenue due to the increased productivity of land on the one hand and loosing its proprietary rights on the other.³⁰ Furthermore, change of peasant tenants involves the politics of favouritism. The Shiromani Akali Dal MPs, MLAs and members of SGPC use it as an instrument of consolidation of their respective vote banks. It is also alleged that the old tenants too use underhand means for maintaining their status-quo. Whereas, the new bidders employ similar tactics and means for cultivating the land on the fresh contract. In the whole game, the religious ethics are forgotten.

30 As early as 1968, SGPC passed a resolution appealing the government not to bring gurdwara's agriculture land under the operation of PEPSU Occupancy Tenants (Vesting of Proprietary Rights) Act 1953. Under this act, occupancy tenants could become owners of their land by paying compensation amounting to twelve times the land revenue, an amount which (given the war-time and post-war inflation and the fact that land revenue continued to be assessed at the pre-war rates) was none to large: Bipan Chandar, Mridula Mukherjee, Aditya Mukherjee, *India After Independence 1947-2000*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 2000, p.426; SGPC's resolution, *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee da Panjah Sala Itihas*, p.389.

AN ANALYSIS OF REMITTANCES BY MIGRANT AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS : A CASE STUDY OF PUNJAB

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Ever since the dawn of human civilization, migration of people from one place to another has played a significant role in shaping the life of the individuals and their well-being and so also the socio-economic development of the nations. While some regions and sectors fall behind in their capacity to support populations, others move ahead and people migrate to access these emerging opportunities. In India internal migration is more important than international migration in terms of the number of people involved and possibly even the volume of remittances. Besides, internal migration involves the poor, lower caste, and less educated people. These movements of the unprivileged people have become a routine part of livelihood strategies. There is powerful evidence which shows that temporary migration is growing. India is now criss-crossed all over by thousands of circular migratory routes between villages within the same district, across districts, and across states, sometimes at opposite ends of the country¹.

These days migration in India is viewed as an instrument of insurance between the sending families and the migrants themselves. Migration now is not a distress phenomenon, rather it helps to bring cash in the poor parts of the country, which can be used to prevent the migrant households from sliding further into poverty, even facilitate them to exit from poverty and the need for money for repaying debts is also covered. The earnings from migration can be substantial for the people living behind. Remittances accounted for one-third of the average annual income of landless and marginal households sending migrants.²

Ever since the advent of Green Revolution and advancement of technology in Punjab agriculture, the labourers from backward states of India have migrated to Punjab in search of higher earnings. The latest Human Development Report for the state of Punjab identifies migration streams into the state from the poor areas of all north-western states as well as eastern and central states. Wage rates are double in Punjab as compared to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh,³ which help them to repay their

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1. Deshingkar, P., *Circular Internal Migration and Development in India*, Overseas Development Institute, London, 2009.
2. Singh, M. and Karan, A. K., *Rural Labour Migration from Bihar*, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi, 2001.
3. Government of Punjab, Human Development Report, 2004, p. 157.

debts, they have incurred from village money-lenders, shopkeepers and others.⁴ The migrant agricultural labourers have not only become an integral part of Punjab's economy, but also an important constituent of our society. The fact that the migrants repeatedly come to Punjab reveals that work and living conditions are a great deal better than the conditions at their native states. They are, generally, attracted by high wage rate, labour contract systems and by the cordial relations with their employers in Punjab. The remittance of money by the migrants to their native areas helps to sustain their families on one hand and promotes the native village economy on the other.

The locale of the present study is the state of Punjab, agriculturally the most developed state. The four stage random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. District was the first stage of the sample, while block and village were the second and third stages of the sample respectively. The respondents, i.e., migrant agricultural labourers became the fourth and ultimate stage of the sample of the study. To make the study representative of the state of Punjab, the field work was conducted in three districts. On the basis of Census data for 2001⁵, the first district having maximum concentration, the second district having less concentration and the third district having the least concentration of the migrant agricultural labourers, viz. Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur and Faridkot respectively were selected for the study. The primary data was collected from the selected respondents on the specially structured and pre-tested schedule through personal interview method. Simple statistical tools like frequencies, percentages, averages as well as advanced statistical techniques like chi-square test, students' t-test, test of proportions (Z-test), Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), etc. were applied to analyse the data.

The sample for the study consisted of 324 respondents in all. Of these, majority of the migrant agricultural labourers, i.e., 206 belonged to Ludhiana district, 80 to Faridkot district, while the remaining 38 migrant agricultural labourers were selected from Faridkot district.

Remittances are an integral feature of migration. It refers to the money that the migrant agricultural labourers send back to their family members at the place of origin. The remittances from migration have contributed significantly to the household income which not only helped the migrants and their families in meeting their current consumption needs but also raised the wage level, particularly in most parts of north Bihar.⁶ If the remitted money is managed in a better way, it can serve as an instrument to reduce poverty of the migrant households and poor states.

The decision to remit largely depends on the intensity of the migrant agricultural labourers' relationship with those who remained behind. A perusal of Table-1

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4. Sidhu, M.S. and Rangi, P. S., "A Study on Migrant Agricultural Labour in Punjab", *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, Vol. 41 No. 4, 1998, p. 717.
 5. Government of India, *Population Census*, C.D., 2001, New Delhi.
 6. Radhakrishna, R.Rao, V.M. and Roy, S., "Beyond Quantification of Poverty: Emerging Issues in Poverty Reduction", *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, Vol. 47, No.2 April-June, 2004, pp.342-45.

clearly shows that in as many as 45.58 per cent cases the remittance money is received by the father of a migrant agricultural labourer. It is followed by one's wife, mother and brother. The survey reveals that although more than two-thirds (68.21 per cent) of the remittance sender migrant agricultural labourers are married, yet only 30.95 per cent of the receivers are wives. It implies that some of the married migrant agricultural labourers also send remittance in the name of their father, mother or brother. There could be various reasons for the above pattern of remittances. Most important perhaps is prerogative of the family patriarch to handle the family accounts. The other reasons may include illiteracy of the wife, having no bank account in her name, and lack of confidence in her to handle the remittances properly.

Table-1
Relationship of Remittance Receiving Persons with
Migrant Agricultural Labourers

Relationship	District			Punjab
	Ludhiana	Hoshiarpur	Faridkot	
Wife	58 (32.04)	21 (28.00)	12 (31.58)	91 (30.95)
Father	83 (45.85)	34 (45.33)	17 (44.74)	134 (45.58)
Mother	26 (14.38)	11 (14.67)	5 (13.16)	42 (14.29)
Brother	10 (5.52)	7 (9.33)	4 (10.52)	12 (7.14)
Others	4 (2.21)	2 (2.67)	0 (0.00)	6 (2.04)

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

Note: The figures given in parentheses represent percentages.

Average annual earnings and expenditure of the migrant agricultural labourers are shown in Table-2. In Punjab, average annual earnings of the migrant agricultural labourers come to Rs. 17118.75. The earnings are the highest in Ludhiana district, i.e., Rs. 18087.50 and the lowest in Hoshiarpur district, i.e., Rs. 15147.60. Annual earnings and the wage rates in different districts under study have a direct relationship with the soil productivity of these places. The productivity of soil is the greatest in Ludhiana district followed by Faridkot and Hoshiarpur districts. Thus, the wages and earnings are directly related to the productivity level of the districts.

Table – 2
Annual Earnings and Expenditure of Migrant Agricultural Labourers
(Rs., Per Annum)

District	Average Earnings	Average Spending	Average Savings
Ludhiana	18087.50	5302.25	12785.25
Hoshiarpur	15147.60	4203.18	10944.42
Faridkot	16016.87	4987.35	11029.52
Punjab	17118.75	4612.58	12506.17

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

The study revealed that on an average a migrant agricultural labourer spends Rs. 4612.58 per annum during his stay in Punjab. The migrant agricultural labourers generally spend their earnings mainly on the purchase of wrist watches, transistors and mobile phones. Apart from this, sometimes they also spend on intoxicants like liquor, tobacco etc. A few of them also spend on watching movies by getting T.V. and V.C.R. on rent. Moreover, at the time when they are about to go back to their native states, they incur expenditure on the purchase of small size television, blankets, *dhoti* and *sarees* for their family members at home.

The data regarding savings pattern of the migrant agricultural labourers has been exhibited in Table – 3. A glance at the table provides that all the migrant agricultural labourers are in the habit of saving something although to the varying extent. The table further reveals that only 11.42 per cent of the migrant agricultural labourers had their saving accounts in banks or post offices. A significantly high proportion of the migrant agricultural labourers, i.e., 67.90 per cent used to keep their savings with their respective farmers. They consider it safe and secure to keep their money with the farmers. They get their money back as and when required. However, the remaining 20.68 per cent of the migrant agricultural labourers managed the savings at their own level.

There has been a significant variation in the savings deposit methods across the districts. In Ludhiana district as many as 15.05 percent migrant agricultural labourers preferred to deposit their savings in banks/post offices, whereas these percentages in the case of Faridkot and Hoshiarpur districts are 5.26 and 5.00 respectively.

Table-3
Distribution of Migrant Agricultural Labourers according to Methods of Savings

Savings Deposit Methods	District						Punjab	
	Ludhiana		Hoshiarpur		Faridkot		No.	%age
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age		
1. No Savings	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
2. Bank/Post Office	31	15.05	4	5.00	2	5.26	37	11.42
3. Own Level	53	25.73	9	11.25	5	13.16	67	20.68
4. With Farmers	122	59.22	67	83.75	31	81.58	220	67.90

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

Ludhiana being a relatively more developed district, banking services gained higher recognition here as compared to the other districts. On the other hand, in Hoshiarpur district significantly a large majority of the migrant agricultural labourers, i.e., 83.75 per cent used to keep their savings with the farmers, followed by 81.58 per cent and 59.22 per cent in the districts of Faridkot and Ludhiana respectively. Most of the migrant agricultural labourers being illiterate avoided to avail the banking facility as they found it difficult to fill up the deposit and withdrawal slips. Even they had no spare time to visit a bank and stand in queues.

Table-4 clearly shows that about 91 per cent of the migrant agricultural labourers used to send their savings to support their families living at their native villages. However, the remaining about 9 per cent did not follow this practice as their families were either staying with them in Punjab or they were unmarried. But there had been a significant district-wise variation in this regard. In Faridkot district, 100 per cent of the migrant agricultural labourers used to send money to their families, while in the case of Hoshiarpur and Ludhiana districts, their percentages are 93.75 and 87.86 respectively.

The table further reveals that the highest proportion of the migrant agricultural labourers, i.e., 74.15 per cent sent the remittances to their families through money order followed by 21.77 per cent who availed banking services and only 4.08 per cent used other methods. Most of them preferred the mode of money order for sending the money to their native places because they considered it to be convenient and safe. Mehta⁷ (2003) has termed the phenomenon of migrants' remittance as 'money order economy'.

Though the pattern for the mode of remittances was found to be similar in all the three districts under study, yet the proportion of the migrant agricultural

7. Mehta, G.S., *Non-Farm Economy and Rural Development*, Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 2003, pp.284-85.

labourers adopting one or the other mode showed a significant difference as the use of money order was made by as high as 86.84 per cent of the migrant agricultural labourers in Faridkot district, 75.14 per cent in Ludhiana district and 65.33 per cent in Hoshiarpur district.

Table-4

Various Aspects related to Remittances by Migrant Agricultural Labourers

Aspects related to Savings	District						Punjab	
	Ludhiana		Hoshiarpur		Faridkot			
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
A. Remittance to Family :								
No	25	12.14	5	6.25	0	0.00	30	9.26
Yes	181	87.86	75	93.75	38	100.00	294	90.74
χ^2 value = 6.76**								
B. Mode of Remittance								
Bank	39	21.55	20	26.67	5	13.16	64	21.77
Money Order	136	75.14	49	65.33	33	86.84	218	74.15
Any other	6	3.31	6	8.00	0	0.00	12	4.08
χ^2 value = 8.39***								
C. Money Lost/ Delay of Order	51	37.50	14	28.57	13	39.39	78	35.78
D. Lost Money during Travelling	30	14.56	8	10.00	6	15.79	44	13.58
E. Relatives/ Natives Stolen Money	21	10.19	3	3.75	8	21.05	32	9.88

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

** Significant at 5% level.

*** Significant at 1% level.

As many as 35.78 per cent of the migrant agricultural labourers reported loss/

delay of money sent through money order. About 14 per cent of them reported loss of money during travelling, whereas in the case of about 10 per cent, money was stolen by their own relatives/natives. The complaints in this regard against the relatives/natives were more in Faridkot district (21.05 per cent) followed by Ludhiana district (10.19 per cent) and Hoshiarpur district (3.75 per cent). This shows that the money sent by the migrant agricultural labourers to their families at their native places through different modes is never free from the risk of being lost or stolen.

The impact of remittances on the economy of labour sending countries depends to a large extent in the way they are used. Over the years, concerns have been expressed about the limited extent of the productive use of remittances. Different scholars have different perceptions about the productive use of remitted money. However, there is a general agreement that bulk of the remittance money is used in daily expenditure for food and clothing, i.e., for consumption purposes and only in a few cases for the productive purposes at the place of origin.⁸ The basic reason being, since the remittances are not directly related to any work effort on the part of the households receiving them, so the households have a greater propensity to use them for current consumption than for investment.⁹

The data given in Table-5 reveals that in most of the cases, i.e., 94.56 per cent the money sent by the migrant agricultural labourers to their families living at the native places is used for their daily consumption needs. Bhatia¹⁰ (1992) observed that remittances by and large were used on consumer goods. Oberoi and Singh¹¹ (1980) and Durand et al.¹² (1996) also found that in most cases remittances melt into consumption, followed by investments into fixed assets. The second purpose of remittances came to be the repayment of debt taken from landlords and/or money-lenders (38.10 per cent), followed by the purchase of domestic articles (30.95 per cent) such as cots, almirahs, televisions, transistors, watches, tables, chairs, sewing machines, bicycles, garments, toiletries etc. The remittances were also used for house repair/construction by 19.05 per cent, while only 4.08 per cent incurred expenditure out of remittances for the marriage of their children.

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8. Kaur, G., *Migratory Labour in Punjab Agriculture*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Economics, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1999, pp.190-205.
 9. Singh, K., *Internal Migration in a Developing Economy*, National Book Organization, New Delhi, 1991, p.13.
 10. Bhatia, A.S., *Rural-Urban Migration*, Deep & Deep Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1992, p.181.
 11. Oberoi, A.S. and Singh, H.K.M., "Migration, Employment and Urban Labour Market - A Case Study of Ludhiana in the Indian Punjab", Population and Labour Policies Programme, Working Paper No. 113, Geneva, ILO, 1981, pp. 509-10.
 12. Durand, J., Parrado, E.A., and Massey, D. S., "Migradollars and Development: A Reconsideration of the Mexican Case," *International Migration Review*, 30, 1996, pp. 423-444.

Table – 5
Distribution of Migrant Agricultural Labourers according to Purpose for which Remittances are used (Multiple Responses)

Purpose for which Remittances are used	District						Punjab	
	Ludhiana 181		Hoshiarpur 75		Faridkot 38		294	
	No.	% age	No.	% age	No.	% age	No.	% age
1. Buying Land	4	2.21	3	4.00	1	2.63	8	2.72
2. House Repair/ Construction	18	9.94	21	28.00	17	44.74	56	19.05
3. Buying Domestic Articles	65	35.91	17	22.67	9	23.68	91	30.95
4. Buying Livestock	20	11.05	6	8.00	7	18.42	33	11.22
5. Business Investments	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
6. Marriages of Children	6	3.31	3	4.00	3	7.89	12	4.08
7. Education of Children	2	1.10	2	2.67	4	10.53	8	2.72
8. Repayment of Loan	62	34.25	34	45.33	16	42.11	112	38.10
9. Daily Consumption Needs	174	96.13	68	90.67	36	94.74	278	94.56

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

The present study reveals that not even in a single case such remittances could be used as business investment. The use of remittances for the purchase of land and livestock was to the tune of 2.72 per cent and 11.22 per cent respectively. Education could secure the least priority as only 2.72 per cent of them spent a meagre amount of remittances on education of their children. The foregoing analysis brings out that the remittances were mainly used for unproductive purposes such as daily consumption needs, house construction, marriage of children and repayment of loans.

The field survey revealed that a part of remittances is also transferred in kind.

Transfers that take place in kind are quite difficult to measure. This was particularly so, given the fact that the migrant agricultural labourers who purchased those things could not make exact calculations. While coming back to their native places the migrant agricultural labourers themselves brought or through friends they send among other things—tape recorder, T.V., V.C.R., transistor/ radio, clothes, blankets, home appliances, brief case and wrist watch.

The migrant agricultural labourers also act as carriers of transmitting modern techniques of farming to their native states. Table-6 brings out that as high as 77.47 per cent of the migrant agricultural labourers preferred to work with modern farming techniques. These techniques include the handling and operating of the farm machinery and implements such as tractor, seed-drill, thresher etc. As many as 17.59 per cent of the migrant agricultural labourers preferred to work with both, modern as well as traditional techniques depending upon the nature of agronomic operations, such as land preparation with tractor and transplanting of paddy manually. The migrant agricultural labourers reported that they were unable to use the advanced technology at their native villages due to financial constraints, unmatching irrigation facilities, poor marketing infrastructure and overall backwardness of the agriculture sector.

Table-6
Distribution of Migrant Agricultural Labourers according to their
Preference to Work with Different Techniques

Techniques	District						Punjab	
	Ludhiana		Hoshiarpur		Faridkot			
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
Modern	155	75.24	66	82.50	30	78.95	251	77.47
Traditional	12	5.83	3	3.75	1	2.63	16	4.94
Both	39	18.93	11	13.75	7	18.42	57	17.59
χ^2 value (between regions) = 2.27ns								

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

Acquiring advanced technical know-how and knowledge by the migrant agricultural labourers is significant in a way that they try to apply it in their native villages so as to transform the traditional agriculture of those areas.

The present study concludes that all the migrant agricultural labourers are in the habit of saving money. Most of them prefer to keep their savings with the farmers. A large proportion of the migrant agricultural labourers also remit the money to their families staying at their native places. It shows that migration is not a *zero-sum* game. It benefits the receiving area, the area of origin, the migrant

agricultural labourers and their families. As regards the mode of remitting money, about three-fourths of the migrant agricultural labourers prefer to send money through money order. This remitted money is mainly used for the daily consumption needs, repayment of debt, purchase of domestic articles, marriage of children etc. However, a very small amount of the remitted money is spent on the education of children.

The focus of policy-makers on the role of remittances in the development of poor states overlooks the amount of burden that the family members left behind have to bear. Therefore, it is suggested that the governments and NGOs of these poor states should pay more attention to the needs of these migrants and their families.

Taking remittances as a tool for the upliftment of migrant agricultural labourers' households out of poverty ignores the fact that up to a certain period the migrant agricultural labourers are not in a position to remit. The governments of those states from where labourers are migrating in the agricultural sector of Punjab state should concentrate on generating employment for these poor people at their native places.

The money sent by the migrant agricultural labourers to their families at their native places through different modes is never free from the risk of being lost or stolen. Efforts should be made for the safe delivery of the money to their family members.

INDUSTRIALIZATION IN PUNJAB, 1858 -1918 : A STUDY OF COTTON TEXTILES

Gopal Parshad*

Cotton textile was the oldest industry of Punjab which played a significant role in the economic development of this region. During pre-colonial rule, the demand for cotton textile was very high throughout the world. Different varieties of cotton cloth of Delhi, Multan, Lahore, Amritsar, Gurdaspur etc. were exported to European as well as Asian countries. During the second half of the eighteenth century, industrial revolution started taking shape in England. In 1764 spinning-jenny of James Hargreaves, in 1771 Water-frame of Richard Arkwright, in 1784 power-loom of Edmund Cartwright and in 1784-1785 the steam engine of Matthew Boulton and James Watt brought about a revolution in cotton textile production. Resultantly, machine-made cotton goods began to flood Indian markets. At the same time, British modern industry required raw material from India. The efforts of the colonial rulers were directed to make India a rich producer of raw material and also a consumer of machine-made goods. Throughout the nineteenth century, the indigenous industries, especially cotton textile, tended to decline. However, some European capitalists began to invest capital in plantation as well as other modern industries in India also.¹

The first indication of industrialization in India can be witnessed after the passing of the Charter Act of 1833, when the European settlers and British capitalists were permitted to invest capital towards expansion of trade and industries in India. As a consequence, the British capitalists started investing money in the establishment of modern industries in India.² However, it is important to note that till the middle of the nineteenth century, the Europeans showed scant interest in

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1. Between 1814-1835, British cotton cloth exported into India rose from less than 1 million yards to over 51 million yards. In the same period, Indian cotton piece-goods imported into Britain fell from one and a quarter million pieces to 306,000 pieces and by 63,000 pieces. See R. Palme Dutt, *India Today*, People's Publishing House Ltd., Delhi 1955, Reprint, p. 48; K. L. Tuteja, "Agricultural Technology in Gujarat: A Study of Exotic Seeds and Saw Gins, 1800- 50", *The Indian Historical Review*, Vol. XVII, No. 1-2, (1990-91), pp. 136-151; For the growth of industrialization in England and its impact on colonies including India, see S. J. Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire*, London, 1868.
2. In the beginning the modern plantation industry was purely European and it primarily was meant to exploit the Indian resources. This industry produced quick and heavy return on the investment. See *Ibid.*, p. 108.

industrialization of India.³ In fact, the British did not want to develop modern industries here. They feared that if modern industries were developed in India, they would ruin the Lancashire cotton textile industries completely. So, the development of modern industries in India moved at a snail's pace. Moreover, lack of capital, poor communication system, poverty, backwardness in the field of science and technology, are considered to be the main obstacles in the path of speedy industrialization in India. Because of these constraints, the origin and growth of modern industries in India did not take place as it did in the west.⁴ Yet, India did witness gradual development of industries.⁵

In fact, the emergence and growth of industries in modern India during the British rule has been a subject of intensive debate. The debate on this issue started in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. It was the early nationalists who initiated the discussion on nature of industrialization. For instance, nationalist historians observed that the British rule was responsible for de-industrialization in India. R.C. Dutt writes : "...It is a painful episode in the history of British rule in India; but it is a story which has to be told to explain the economic condition of the Indian people, and their present helpless dependence on agriculture. The invention of the power-loom in Europe completed the decline of Indian industries; and when in recent years the power-loom was set up in India, England once more acted towards India unfair jealousy...."⁶

The Colonizers imposed heavy import duties on Indian goods in England. They also adopted *Laissez Faire* policy. Truly speaking, the policy of the development of British trade and industry was made in the interest of metropolis. The colonizers wanted to use economic development in the growth of British industry. They wanted to establish infrastructure of colonial capitalism in India which could be used in the interest of metropolis. Moreover, when some Indian capitalists also started investing money in modern industries, the colonizers restricted them by imposing heavy tariff duties. At the same time, they started importing machine-made goods in India also. R.C. Dutt further argues: "...thus large import of cotton goods into India secured by restriction on Indian industry...."⁷

Besides, the British officials and some historians of colonial school stated that

3. D. R. Gadgil, *The Industrial Evolution of India in Recent Times, 1860-1939*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1971, p. 47.
4. S. C. Kuchhal, *The Industrial Economy of India*, Chaitanya Publishing House, Allahabad, 1983, p.34.
5. 'Between 1870 and 1947 India was an industrial country in the sense that manufacturing out put was growing as a share of national income, the value added per worker was increasing and that productivity was higher and rising faster in the secondary sector than in agriculture. In out put term in India cotton and jute industries were significant in global term by 1914, which in 1947 India was tenth largest producer of manufactured goods in the world.' See B. R. Tomlinson, *The Economy of Modern India 1800-1970 (The New Cambridge History of India, Vol.-3)*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, p. 92.
6. R.C. Dutt, *The Economic History of India : Under Early British Rule*, Vol.-I (Two Vols. Bound in one), Low Price Publications, Delhi, 1990 (First Published 1901), p. vii.
7. *Ibid.*, *The Economic History of India: In The Victorian Age 1837-1900*, Vol.-II, (Two vols. Bound in one), Low Price Publications, Delhi, 1990 (First Published 1903), p. 403.

industrialization in India was the result of the establishment of the British rule. They argue that the British rule created the conditions for industrialization. Various plantation and other modern industries such as, cotton textile, jute, paper, sugar, iron and steel etc. were started to establish in India. However, most of the plantations as well as machine-based modern industries were owned and managed by the Europeans or the British. Vera Anstey mentions: ".....The plantation and large-scale industries including the tea, coffee, rubber, textile, coal-mining, engineering, iron and steel and chemical industries grown up during (or since) the middle of the nineteenth century; many of them have been actually promoted by the Europeans, and their organization has been influenced fundamentally by western ideas."⁸ It is necessary to mention here that the cotton textile and iron and steel industries were owned and managed by the Indians. These two industries depended mainly on Indian capital. Except these, most of the other industries were being run with the capital and management of European entrepreneurs or capitalists. Supporting the role of the British government in the growth of modern industries, B. B. Misra writes: "The ending of the company's rule in 1858 resulted in a steep and steady rise in India's external trade, which created capital resources for industrialization, paying for loans incurred on government account for the construction of railways, irrigation, and other public works, as well as maintaining the entire establishment of the Indian office and Indian civil service. The flow of British capital and skill contributed to the agricultural and manufacturing industries and also led to the introduction of the Managing Agency System which provided a pattern of industrial organisation, which shaped the character of India's economic development."⁹

The introduction of western education and the advancement of technology, though belated, created middle class society which helped in the rise of *bourgeois* capitalism in India. This newly emerged class started investing capital in trade and industries. The investment of capital, especially in modern industries was highly adventurous. It is pertinent to mention here that the old Indian bankers did not want to invest money in modern industries. Only few Bengalis, Gujratis and Parsis took interest in the establishment of modern industries, while, as stated earlier, a large number of the industries were established and managed by the Europeans.¹⁰

8. Vera Anstey, *The Economic Development of India*, Longman's Green and Co. London, 1957 (First Published 1929), p. 109.
9. B.B. Misra, *The Indian Middle Class: The Growth In Modern Times*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1983 (First Published 1961), pp. 13-14.
10. "A group of 15 Managing Agents controlled and managed 189 Industrial Units in 1913. 93 of which were controlled and managed by the 'Big Five Managing Agency Houses of Calcutta, viz. Messrs Andrew Yule, Bird, Shaw Wallance, Duncan and Begg, Dunlop and Company', all of which were foreign owned and operated. With the exception of Tata, there was no Indian Managing House which controlled or managed more than 5 industrial units. In the Eastern Sector, the only Indian firm which deserves mention was that of Messrs. N.C. Sirkar and Company which managed five big collieries and which had its own Board of Directors and a large number of foreign directors. In the western sector, however, a large number of Indian Managing Agents mostly belonging to the Jewish, Parsee and Gujarati Community were just budding in. Prominent among these enterprising Indian industrialists were Sassooms, Khataus, Cowasjis, Thackerseys, Jeejeebhoyas and Wadias." See, *Ibid.*, pp. 248-49; Rajat K. Ray, *Industrialization in India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1974, pp. 14-36; A.K. Bagchi, *Private Investment in India 1900-1939*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1972, p. 24.

But, Andre Gunder Frank rightly observes that the colonial rule did not work for economic development in India. He mentions that India was an underdeveloped country during the British rule.¹¹ Besides, Bipan Chandra writes, the colonialism and capitalism were not the same. The colonialism was the result of capitalism. When capitalism joined colonialism, it created the infrastructure in the interest of the metropolis. It functioned to restrict the development of Indian Industries and worked in the interest of the colonial rule. In fact, the British capitalists invested money in plantation industries such as tea, coffee, indigo and jute. They also promoted agriculture and commercial products because these industries fulfilled the needs of raw material for British modern industries.¹²

In fact, the colonial rulers constructed railways, roads, irrigation networks etc. in India for their own interests. Bipan Chandra writes : ".... It has however, been widely pointed out that their construction was not coordinated with the economic needs of India, that they built at the cost of other social overheads and industries, that their 'backward and forward linkage' had their positive effects in Britain, that their 'demonstration effect' was severely limited, that their impact on economic development was far less than should have been, they created an enclave economy and that they were, therefore, not so much a means of developing India as of exploiting it."¹³ At the same time, the British rule restricted the Indian economy. All developmental activities were supervised by the colonial government. Railways, roads, plantation industries and the policy of *Laissez Faire* etc. were meant only to serve British interests. The economy of India remained in the underdeveloped stage during the British rule. The British rulers protected only those industries which gave them profit. As stated earlier, they did not support those industries which had direct or indirect competition with Lancashire modern industry. In this manner, the colonialism created and perpetuated economic backwardness. This, in other words, can be described as, what Gunder Frank says, development of under development.¹⁴

Moreover, another view-point has recently come from American scholars. Morris D. Morris states that the development of modern industries depended upon demand, supply and vast market. India's population was not very large before 1872, which affected the demands of industrialization. He argues : ".....But the enormous absolute size of the population and its growth did not necessarily create a demand that encouraged machine production. In fact, it probably worked against the introduction of modern technology....."¹⁵ Towards supply side he writes: "There were also very serious inhibitions on the supply side. In India's under-developed

11. Andre Gunder Frank, 'The Development of Underdevelopment', in *Monthly Review*, Vol. - 18 (September 1966), pp. 17-31.

12. Bipan Chandra, 'Reinterpretation of Nineteenth Century Indian Economic History', in *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. V-I (March 1968), p. 40.

13. *Ibid.*

14. See for detailed study Andre Gunder Frank, 'The Development of Underdevelopment', in *Monthly Review*, Vol. - 18 (September 1966), pp. 17-31.

15. Morris D. Morris, 'The Growth of Large- Scale Industry To 1947', in Dharama Kumar (ed.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol. 2, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983, p. 554.

state, most factors for production were costly. All machinery had to be imported. Human capital in the form of skilled labour and technical administration was scarce and because it initially had to be imported from abroad, it was very expensive. Fuel was costly but domestic transport and raw material and labour was cheap and on occasion—as in the jute and cotton industries it provided an industrial advantage. But cheap labour typically worked against mechanization. The expansion of demand for a product did not necessarily put pressure on labour supply or on labour costs related to other costs. Thus, there was less incentive for innovation and mechanization. To the contrary, the businessman was encouraged to expand existing organization rather than to shift to techniques where capital requirements were relatively greater. And even where mechanized industries grew up, they invariably used cheaper labour per unit of capital than was true in the west. All this a rational response to relative factor price relationship but it slowed the expansion of factory organization.”¹⁶ Truly, a businessman always had to bear in mind the dimensions of the market price at which he could sell and his cost of production and distribution. Due to non-availability of capital, goods market, demand and supply, he often avoided new industries and concentrated on established ones where experience reduced risk and uncertainty. He further writes : “.....There were not the only uncertainties. The quality if not the quantity of labour was always a problem, costs of training were hard to predict. The rate of labour turnover, cause not only by the rural link but by the growth of competitors who raided trained workers, was extremely difficult to predict. In effect, the entrepreneur faced great overall uncertainty about the levels of productivity that could be attained. Thus, a new enterprise had to promise a very high rate of return not only to meet the cost of scarce capital but also to allow for the greater risks. The higher the rate of return required offsetting the general uncertainties of novel enterprises, the fewer were to opportunities that promoters and investors found promising. All these factors were very substantial obstacles to the rapid expansion of mechanized industry.”¹⁷ However, when demand arose and new trading centres grew, the modern industries began to establish in India. Therefore he says : “.....the later nineteenth century also saw the rapid growth of modern factories for the production of cotton and jute fabrics, the development of a great railway network and the expansion of the coal mining industry to support these....”¹⁸ Thus, expansion of demand, growth of population, political stability - all played a vital role in the industrialization of India. The development of railway and implementation of *Laissez Faire* gave rapid boost to it. Morris D. Morris appears convincing in the same respect. It was overall the colonial rule and its policies that had a powerful influence on the whole trend of the industrial development.

These different view-points in the light of the Macro and Micro aspects of industrialization, therefore, from the bases of this study wherein an effort has been made to examine the actual progress of industrialization in Punjab during the late

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*, p. 555

18. *Ibid.*, p. 557.

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is important to mention here that industrialization in India varied from region to region. It did not develop in the same manner and at the same pace in Punjab as it did in eastern and western India. Most of the modern industries were developed in Bombay, Calcutta and Ahmadabad. Therefore, in this paper broad trends of industries in Punjab have been examined to focus on the complexities of industrial development in India. In other words, this paper takes a fresh look at the cotton textile industry that existed in the colonial Punjab.

After the establishment of British rule in Punjab in 1849, the colonial government developed the means of transportation and communication.¹⁹ In fact, various cities and towns of Punjab like, Lahore, Multan, Sialkot, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Ambala, Panipat, Rohtak, Rewari etc. were connected with railways as well as macadamized roads. As a result, a large number of new *mandis* as well as commercial centres emerged. It was chiefly due to the introduction of railways that the villages of Punjab were economically integrated to the world market. Now the peasants of this region started selling their crops in urban markets on cash payment. At the same time, the demand of cotton increased because of the industrialization in England. American Civil War (1865) also cut off supplies of American Cotton to Britain's textile industry. Resultantly, Punjab cotton was suddenly in great demand. The boom in cotton prices also created great profits. This profit attracted some capitalists to establish cotton textile industries. Yet, large-scale industries were not developed in Punjab as it developed in Bombay, Calcutta, Ahmadabad etc. Actually, as stated earlier, Punjab was an agricultural tract in which only agro-industries could be developed. Moreover, this region was at an enormous distance from the sea. On three sides, it was surrounded by sparsely populated provinces which would never provide large markets for its industries. On the fourth side, it adjoined the United Province with similar means of production. Therefore, it had to look for its markets either to itself or to distant countries.²⁰ However, some plantation as well as other modern industries like cotton textile, jute, paper, glass etc. developed in colonial Punjab.

Historically, in India, the first modern cotton mill was established near Calcutta around 1817 or 1818. After that few other industries were set up in western and southern India. But these industries did not succeed. In 1854, another cotton mill was established in Bombay. It was established by a Parsi merchant, Cowasji Nanabhoy Davar, who became the pioneer of similar enterprises in the region and

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19. Narayani Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires, 1803-1931*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1981, p. 42; Dharama Kumar (ed.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol. II, p. 739; B. S. Saini, *The Social and Economic History of the Punjab, 1901-1939*, Ess Ess Publication, Delhi, 1975, pp 299 and 310-312; Harish C. Sharma, *Artisans of the Punjab*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1996, pp. 68-70; Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under imperialism, 1885-1947*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1989, pp. 207 & 218-222.
 20. L.W. Middleton and S.M. Jacob, *Census of India 1921, Vol. XV: Punjab and Delhi*, part -I, Civil and Military Gazette Press, Lahore, 1923, p. 21.

the radiating point of modern cotton textile manufactures in India.²¹ But first mechanized modern cotton textile industry was set up in 1856, when the first operational steam powered cotton mill in Asia went into production in Bombay. By 1865, there were 10 cotton mills, the majority of them being in Bombay. In the next few years, about 58 mills were established in Bombay,²² Ahamdabad etc. In 1914, this number raised up to 271 with an average daily employment of about 260,000.²³

However, in Punjab, no such large-scale industry was established during the colonial rule. The first cotton-textile mill was founded in Delhi (Delhi Cloth Mills) in 1889. The main products of this industry were yarn and piece-goods. It is important to mention here that in this mill a low count of yarn was produced. A large part of its thread was sold to the handlooms, while a small part of it was exported to the United Province.²⁴ After some time, this cotton textile industry started weaving works.²⁵ Moreover, the All-India Spinning and Weaving Mills Ltd. with capital of Rs. 25,00,000 was established in Gurdaspur district. The Bhiwani Cotton Spinning and Weaving Co. Ltd. was registered at Bombay in August 1910 with a capital of Rs. 700,000. It started working in 1912 with 300 looms and 10,000 spindles.²⁶ In Delhi two cotton weaving and spinning industries were established during 1888-89. Hanuman and Mahadeo Cotton Spinning Mills was set up by James Elison in 1888 and following year Delhi Cloth and General Mills Co. Ltd. was established.²⁷ In 1893, Krishna Cotton Mills Co. was set up. In the present Haryana, three cotton industries (cleaning and pressing) such as Harmukh Rai and Gobind Rai Cotton Mills, New Mofussil Co. at Palwal (Faridabad) and Ram Bilas Jauri Mal Cotton Mills at Hodal were established during 1901-1902.²⁸ Spinning and weaving combined work was done in the industries of Delhi and Lahore with an aggregate of 1,643 operatives, while another industry at Delhi carried on ginning, spinning and weaving work simultaneously.²⁹ Table - I shows the establishment of major cotton textile industries in Punjab.

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21. James Douie, *The Punjab: North-West Frontier Province and Kashmir*, Seema Publications, Delhi 1974, p. 156; Morris D. Morris, 'The Growth of Large-Scale Industry to 1947', in Dharama Kumar (ed.), *Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol-2, p. 574; D.R. Gadgil, *The Industrial Evolution of India*, p. 55.
 22. B.R. Tomlinson, *The Economy of Modern India, 1860-1970*, p. 109; *Imperial Gazetteer of India 1908*, Vol. III, p. 197.
 23. Trithankar Roy, *The Economic History of India, 1857-1947*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2000, p. 165.
 24. James Douie, *The Punjab : North-West Frontier Province and Kashmir*, p. 156.
 25. B.S. Saini, *The Social and Economic History of the Punjab*, p. 262; S.C. Sharma, *Punjab, The Crucial Decade 1911-1920*, Nirmal Publishers and Distributors, Delhi, 1987, pp. 54-60.
 26. A. Latifi, *The Industrial Punjab*, Longmans Green and Co., London, 1911, p.25.
 27. B.S. Saini, *The Social and Economic History of the Punjab*, pp. 261-62.
 28. *District and State Gazetteer of the Undivided Punjab*, Vol.-iv (Prior to Independence), D.R. Publishing House, Delhi, 1985, p. 391.
 29. P.H. Kaul, *Census of India 1911*, Vol. XIV : *Punjab*, part-I, p. 500.

Table - I
Establishment of Modern Cotton Textile Mills in Punjab

Name of the Factory	Year of Est.	No. of Looms	No. of spindles	Capital Paid up
Delhi Cloth and General Mills Ltd.	1889	177	20,456	700,000
Krishna Mills Ltd.	1893	-	22,968	700,000
Jamuna Mills Delhi	1896	3	15,000	450,000
Hanuman and Mahadeo Mills Delhi	-	200	15,936	650,000
Lahore Spinning and Weaving Mills Ltd.	1898	150	21,208	701,990
Mela Ram Cotton Mills Lahore.	1897	-	13,248	-
Amritsar Cotton Mills Company Ltd. Amritsar	1896	-	16,500	700,000
The Bhiwani Cotton Spinning and weaving Mills	1910	207	12,728,	700,000

Source : A Latifi, *Industrial Punjab*, Longmans Green and Co., London, 1911 p. 25; A.C. Badenoch, *Punjab Industries*, Superintendent Government Printing, Lahore, 1917, p. 6.

The Table - I above shows that eight big industries were established in Punjab during 1889 -1910. All these industries gave employment to an average of 3,600 workers (men, women and children), and produced about 160,000 maunds of yarn annually, 99 per cent of which was of 20 counts and below. On the other hand, Punjab had to import approximately 50,000 maunds of yarn of the higher counts.³⁰ It means that most of the yarn from Europe was consumed by these cotton textile industries. Besides, these industries faced financial crisis during 1911-1913. However, Delhi Cloth and General Mills Co. Ltd. (D.C.M.) survived the crisis. It achieved the largest inland producer of cotton textile under the leadership of Lala Shri Ram.³¹

Actually, the growth of cotton textile industry depended on the availability of

30. A. Latifi, *Industrial Punjab*, p. 26.

31. *Imperial Gazetteer of India* (Province Series Delhi), Delhi, 1976, pp. 311 and 327.

raw cotton. The colonial government encouraged the peasants to grow cotton in their fields. Resultantly, the yield and acreage of commercial crops like cotton increased in Punjab. The Table - II shows cotton cultivation in Punjab during 1860-1870.

Table - II
COTTON CULTIVATION IN PUNJAB (IN ACRES)

Year	Acres
1860-61	467,513
1861-62	482,351
1862-63	547,414
1863-64	537,183
1864-65	872,851
1865-66	613,262
1866-67	624,193
1867-68	687,321
1868-69	679,294
1869-70	835,053

Source: Peter Harnetty, "Cotton Export and Indian Agriculture 1861-1870", *The Economic History Review*, Vol. XXIV, No. 3 (August, 1971), pp. 414 - 429.

These figures in Table-II show that there was a simultaneous increase in cotton cultivation in Punjab. During 1860-61, Punjab produced cotton on 467,513 acres of land, which increased up to 835,053 acres in 1869-70.³² In 1879-80, the total cotton cultivated area was 806,380 acres, which decreased to 761,729 acres in 1880-81, and further it increased again up to 918,265 acres in 1881-82, and then declined to 898,818 acres in 1882-83. This increase and decrease was due to the failure of crops.³³ American cotton cultivation was also done in Punjab. Apart from this, the area of improved *desi* cotton also increased in this region.³⁴ However, the whole cotton of Punjab was not supplied to native industries. About 137,384 maunds of cotton were exported annually to Britain.³⁵

In 1911, Punjab had 65 (out of 88 ginning and weaving) ginning factories in which 139,301 workers were engaged. It shows that the cotton ginning work was flourishing rapidly during the colonial rule. However, the strength of spinners, and weavers of cotton decreased considerably up to 8 per cent (from 959,688 to 883,156) during 1901-1911.³⁶ It seems that this decline was due to the tough competition

32. Peter Harnetty, "Cotton Export and Indian Agriculture 1861-1870", *The Economic History Review*, Vol. XXIV, No. 3 (August, 1971), pp. 414-429; Gopal Parshad, "Cultivation of cash Crops in Punjab During 1849-1947", *Journal of Regional History*, Vol. XIII-XIV (New Series) (2008-2009), pp. 111-128.

33. *Monograph on Cotton Manufacture in Punjab 1884*, p.1.

34. Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885-1947*, p. 226.

35. Gopal Parshad, 'Commercialization of Agriculture: A Study of Cotton Cultivation in Colonial Punjab', *The Punjab Past and Present*, Vol. XXXIX-Part-II, No. 78 (October, 2008), pp.118-133; K. T. Shah, *Industrialisation of the Punjab*, Government Printing Press, Lahore, 1941, p. 62.

36. P.H. Kaul, *Census of India 1911*, Vol. XIV : Punjab, part-I, p. 498.

with foreign piece-goods. The following Table - III shows the growth of cotton ginning, pressing and weaving industries in colonial Punjab.

Table - III
Cotton Ginning, Pressing and Weaving Mills in Punjab (1901-1911)

Description	No. of Factories	Strength of Operatives
Cotton Ginning	22	1446
Cotton Ginning and Pressing	15	1287
Cotton Spinning	11	1058
Ginning and Pressing etc.	4	287
Cotton Weaving	3	123
Cotton Press and Flour Mills	1	59
Weaving with other industries	2	133
Cotton Press	3	98
Cotton Spinning and Weaving	3	1643
Cotton Ginning with other Industries	23	1042
Cotton Ginning and Weaving	1	516

Source: P. H. Kaul, *Census of India, 1911*, Vol. XIV, *Punjab*, Part-I, p. 499.

The Table - III shows that ginning, spinning, weaving and pressing works were done in cotton textile factories in Punjab during 1858 - 1918. In 1904, Montgomery district in Lahore Division had 4 cotton cleaning factories from which one was closed. These industries gave employment to 86 persons. Lahore District had 20 cotton ginning and pressing factories with 1,434 hands. In addition to Lahore city, 2 cotton spinning and weaving mills were working with 771 hands.³⁷ There were also 5 cotton ginning, 3 cotton pressing and 1 combined ginning and pressing industries with 427 hands.³⁸ Amritsar had 5 combined cotton-ginning factories with flour and rice mills. In these factories, 377 workers were engaged. Moreover, Sialkot had 5 cotton-ginning and pressing and 3 combined with flour and cotton ginning with 475 employees.³⁹ Jhang district in Multan had 10 cotton ginning, 6 cotton pressing, 5 combined ginning and pressing and the other one combined with ginning as well as flour and cotton pressing and flour mills with 1220 workers. Multan also continued about 10 cotton-ginning, 3 cotton pressing mills

37. *Imperial Gazetteer of India 1908*, Vol-II, p.23.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

with 657 hands.⁴⁰ Importantly, most of the cotton ginning and pressing factories were allied with flour mills and rice-husking, because most of the cotton textile industries were facing a great deal of problem. It seems that due to competition with foreign cotton piece-goods, lack of raw material etc. the cotton textile industries were facing crisis. So, these industries had to be allied with other agricultural industries (flour mill and rice-husking) to reduce the loss.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, there were 88 cotton ginning and weaving factories in Punjab with 7,712 operatives, including 34 European and 2,889 Indian skilled workmen. Eight of these large-scale industries were supervised by the Europeans. There were 23 such factories which had 20 to 86 operatives in each. In spite of these, twenty-two factories were devoted to ginning alone, 11 to spinning, 3 to weaving and 3 to pressing cotton only.⁴¹

In 1918, Punjab had 164 ginning and processing industries in which 7,266 male and 1,596 female workers were employed.⁴² All these industries were using power like steam, oil and electricity.⁴³ These industries were working at Hissar, Karnal, Gurgaon, Ambala, Ludhiana, Lahore, Amritsar, Shahpur, Montgomery, Lyallpur, Multan etc. Most of the cotton textile industries were financed by the local banks as well as trading classes (the *Khattris*, the *Banias* and the *Marwaris*).⁴⁴ As stated earlier, due to increasing demand of foreign piece-goods, the cotton textile industries suffered from crisis. However, the initial profits attracted a large number of competitors. So, many ginning mills were established in Punjab during the colonial rule. But most of the ginning mills worked only during cotton seasons, which could be hardly two months long. Besides, during the colonial regime, the total number of cotton pressing and ginning factories, under factory Act were about 157, and there were many smaller concerns with half a dozen to dozen gins, which did not fall within the ambit of the Act.⁴⁵ The Table - IV shows the growth of the cotton textile industries in colonial Punjab.

40. *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 96, 212, 232 and 33.

41. P. H Kaul, *Census of India, 1911*, Vol. XIV, *Punjab*, Part-I, p. 499.

42. L. Middleton and S.M. Jacob, *Census of India, 1921*, Vol. XV, *Delhi and Punjab*, Part-II, p. 429.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 429-432.

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 404-5; Meenlochna Vatts, *Politics and Society in Delhi 1920-1934*, Unpublished Thesis, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, 1983, pp. 34-36.

45. According to the Indian Factory Act of 1879, a factory with 100 employees using steam, water or mechanical power was placed under factory Act. This clause was amended in 1890 as recommended by the industrial commission and a factory with 50 or more hands was placed under factory Act for the purpose of inspection. Later on, the factories employing twenty or more persons were also brought under the purview of the factory Act. See, *Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908*, Vol. XV, pp. 246-47; A.C. Badenoch, *Punjab Industries 1911-1917*, pp. 6-7.

Table - IV
Growth of Cotton Textile Industries in Punjab (1904 - 1918)

Year	No. of Industries
1904	114
1907	165
1909	186
1910	202
1912	167
1913	170
1914	149
1915	140
1918	164

Source: Compiled from Govt. of India, *Proceedings of Commerce and Industry (Factories)*, February 1906, F.No. 2; *Ibid.*, October 1907, No. 3-16; *Ibid.*, December 1908, No. 1-18; *Ibid.*, November 1910, No. 1-13; *Ibid.*, November 1912, No. 1-16; *Ibid.*, May 1917, No. 1-17; H.C. Sharma, *Artisans of the Punjab : A study of Social Change in Historical Perspective (1849-1947)*, p. 79; L. Middleton and S.M. Jacob, *Census of India, 1921*, Vol. xv, *Punjab and Delhi*, Part-II, p. 429.

The Table - IV shows that the total number of cotton textile industries usually fluctuated. In 1904, 114 factories were working successfully, which increased up to 202 in 1910. It seems that this increase in the number of cotton mills was the result of Swadeshi Movement. After 1910 cotton textile industry started to decline sharply. But the total number of cotton textile industries increased after 1915. In fact, during the First World War, the demand of cotton clothes increased. Resultantly, various new textile industries were established in Punjab during War period.⁴⁶

It is important to note that most of the cotton textile industries of Punjab were in critical conditions. These industries were facing financial crisis. In fact, the colonial government did not want to develop textile industries in Punjab. Moreover, the local grown cotton had very short staple. Its maximum length was 5/6 inch, and, as such, it could not spin more than 20 counts. Its yarn could not be used for weaving fine clothes. These industries had also lack of raw material, because most of the raw cotton of this region was exported to Bombay as well to England. In spite of these, lack of fuel and shortage of skilled labour were the other causes for the slow growth of cotton textile industries.⁴⁷ Consequently, All India Spinning and Weaving Mills Co. Ltd. had to be wound up before it started operation. The Mela Ram Mills had worked only for a few years. The Amritsar Cotton Mills too had no bright prospects. The Lahore Spinning Mills and Weaving Co. and Delhi Cloth Mills were only industries which were working smoothly.⁴⁸

46. Gopal Parshad, *Industrial Development in Northern India*, National Book Organisation, New Delhi, 2007, p. 135.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

48. A.C. Badenoch, *Punjab Industries 1911-1917*, p. 7.

In spite of these, the policies adopted in Punjab by the British were different from the ones followed by them in other parts of the country like Bombay, Calcutta and Ahmdabad.⁴⁹ Actually, the colonial government wanted Punjab to remain as agricultural tract so that it (the colonial government) could obtain raw material as well as market for British goods. It also regulated the whole tariff policy in favour of British industry. Moreover, a large quantity of raw cotton and grains of Punjab were exported to Europe.⁵⁰ However, in the beginning of the twentieth century, the British government began to change its industrial policy in India because of the pressure of the freedom struggle against the colonizers. During the war period, the demand of army uniforms, tents etc. raised. Resultantly, various cotton textile industries were established in Punjab. Apart from this, the British government also made some efforts to develop this industry. In 1916, an industrial Commission was established to find the difficulties and possibilities in the growth of modern industries in India. All the recommendations of the Commission were accepted by the government.⁵¹ However, the British government did not show much interest in the development of cotton textile industries. O' Dwyer, the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab was pro-agriculture. He adopted anti-industrial policy in this region. He destroyed the various industries of Shri Harkishan Lal. Even then, the growth of cotton textile industries continued at a slow pace.⁵² Importantly, the colonial government also gave some protection to Punjab industries by establishing technical schools like the Government Institute of Dying and Calico Printing, Government Technical School etc.⁵³

In the end, we can conclude this paper with the observations that during the colonial rule, the development of industries moved at a slow pace. The colonial government wanted Punjab to be an agricultural tract for obtaining raw material. The British did not want to establish here such industries as had direct or indirect competition with their industries. Even then, some modern cotton textile industries began to be established in Punjab. During the Swadeshi Movement, Indian leaders also raised the demand for industrialization. Resultantly, colonial rulers had to change their industrial policy. The British government established an Industrial Commission in 1916 to find the possibilities for the development of modern industries. Besides, the First World War also gave impetus to cotton textile industries. During the war period, a large number of textile industries were established by the Indian capitalists. In 1915, there were 140 cotton textile industries in colonial Punjab, which increased up to 164 in 1918. But, most of these industries suffered from financial crisis, shortage of raw material, low demand of their products and lack of skilled labour as well as latest technology. These mills also had to face competition from foreign cotton piece-goods. Moreover, the colonial industrial policy also restricted the speedy growth of cotton textile industries in Punjab. The fact of the matter is that industrial development in Punjab during the British rule was at snail's pace. It gained real acceleration only after India's independence in 1947.

49. Mustpha Kamal Pasha, *Colonial Political Economy: Recruitment and Underdevelopment in the Punjab*, p.165.

50. Vera Anstey, *The Economic Development of India*, p. 331.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 216; D. R. Gadgil, *The Industrial Evaluation of India*, p. 338.

52. Gopal Parshad, *Industrial Development in Northern India*, p. 135.

53. A. Latifi, *Industrial Punjab*, pp.15-18.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES AND SECRET MASS CREMATIONS IN PUNJAB DURING COUNTER-TERRORISM ERA : A RUTHLESS VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

*Satnam Singh Deol**

Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikhism, in an elegiac manner, highlighted the cruelty and impunity of life around him. He revealed, "The age is like a knife. The kings are butchers. Religion has taken wings and flown away. In the dark night of falsehood, I cannot see where the moon of truth is rising."¹ It has been observed that the miserable status of social and political climate in Punjab, as revealed by Guru Nanak Dev, seem to have remained unrelieved and human rights of the people are still in danger. The brutal violation of human rights in the region during the terrorism and counter-terrorism era is an evident testimony justifying the consistency of above mentioned decadence in Punjab during recent times.

Punjab has witnessed the tragic era of insurgency for more than a decade (1984 to 1995). During that time the State of Punjab was prevailing in the violent phase of terrorism and counter-terrorism operations. The agitation which was initiated for demanding state autonomy for Punjab, demanding water rights, local control over agricultural production and prices, and official recognition of the Punjabi language,² ultimately converted itself into a violent campaign against the Indian State. Since 1985, after the occurrence of Operation Blue Star,³ the violent campaign against the Indian State eventually changed into more lethal violent movement of terrorism and insurgency.⁴

The Sikhs, who had contributed to the freedom of the country with their lives, were dubbed as anti-national, and the age-old Hindu-Sikh unity was put on test in this troubled period. Some found the reason of Sikh militancy in 'the wrong policies pursued by the central government since independence'.⁵ Some others ascribed it

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1. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 145.
2. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. 2, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 293-318.
3. Ram Narayan Kumar, "The Ghalughara: Operation Blue Star- A Retrospect", *Sikh Review*. No. 558, June 2000, www.sikhreview.org/june2000/tsr8.htm.
4. Ram Chandra Guha, *India After Gandhi*, Picador Publishers, New Delhi, 2006, pp. 557-562.
5. Satya M. Rai, *Punjab Since Partition*, Durga Publications, Delhi, 1986, p. 72.

to 'an allegedly slow process of alienation among a section of the Punjab population in the past'.⁶ Still others trace it to 'the rise of certain personalities committed to fundamentalist stream of thought'.⁷ The efforts were also made to trace its origin in 'the socio-economic developments which had ushered in the state since the advent of the Green Revolution'.⁸ The problem was seen as multi-dimensional. Moreover, the penalties of the problem were severe enough to result into one of the most brutal violation of human rights ever occurred in the region. The decade-long crackdown had led to the deaths of at least 30,000 people in Punjab including 10,000 innocent civilians.⁹ However some observers estimate the number of casualties as high as beyond calculations.¹⁰

The terrorists had atrociously violated the right to life, right to freedom of speech, freedom of movement and right to religion of the people severely and indiscriminately. The terrorists' organisations had targeted civil servants, journalists and Hindu and Sikh civilians.¹¹ In majority cases, the attacks were designed to drive out the minority Hindu population. The terrorist groups frequently murdered suspected police informers and members or supporters of rival factions. The terrorist organisations had also issued death threats and had assassinated Sikhs who had not supported the separatist cause or who had resisted the efforts of some terrorist groups to impose a fundamental Sikh ideology.¹² Terrorist groups had assassinated civil servants, elected officials and politicians and kidnapped and murdered their family members.¹³

To counter the terrorism and insurgency, the government security forces, operating in Punjab, had also systematically violated the domestic and international norms of human rights.¹⁴ Throughout Punjab, torture was held systematically in Police Stations, in prisons and in the detention camps used by the paramilitary forces.¹⁵ In most cases the victims were killed after being detained in the custody of the police or the paramilitary forces.¹⁶ The security forces in Punjab had also

6. Rajiv A. Kapur, *Sikh Separatism: The Politics of Faith*, Allen and Unwin Publications, London, 1986, p. 86.
7. Chand Joshi, *Bhindranwala: Myth and Reality*, Vikas Publications, New Delhi, 1984, pp. 11-32.
8. Nirmal Singh Azad, "Punjab de Arthik Vikas di Roop Rekha", in Gurcharan Singh Arshi (ed.), *Pichhle Dahake da Punjabi Sahit*, Punjabi Academy, Delhi, 1987, pp. 13-40.
9. Jaskaran Kaur, "A Judicial Blackout: Judicial Impunity for Disappearance in Punjab", *Sikh Spectrum.Com Monthly*, June, 2003, p.3.
10. Inderjit Singh Jajjee, *Politics of Genocide: Punjab 1984-1998*, Ajanta Publishers, New Delhi, 1999, p. 93.
11. Human Rights Watch/Asia Watch, *Crisis in Punjab*, 1991, p.1.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.
13. Monimoy Das Gupta, "Candidate Elimination Plan in Punjab", *Telegraph*, May 15, 1992.
14. G.S. Bajwa and D.K. Bajwa, "Violation of Human Rights in India - Nature and Extent of Police Atrocities", in Neeta Bore (ed.), *Human Rights in India - Problems and Perspectives*, Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, 1997, p.223.
15. Human Rights Watch/Asia Watch, 1991, *op.cit.*, p.5.
16. Jaskaran Kaur, *op.cit.*, p.3.

engaged in widespread disappearances.¹⁷ In this typical scenario, the Police took into custody a suspected terrorist or a supporter of terrorists, without filing an arrest report. If the detainee died during interrogation or was executed, the officials denied that the person had ever been in the custody. They also claimed that the person had died during an armed encounter with Police or security forces or had disappeared after absconding from police custody.¹⁸ Scores of people are reported to have disappeared in mysterious circumstances from police custody between 1992 and 1995. There are a lot of cases in which the security forces illegally arrested the suspected terrorists or the relatives and supporters of terrorists.¹⁹ The people arrested were neither produced before courts nor came back to their homes. They had either died in the police custody due to torture or were shown killed in the encounters. Furthermore, the people propagated to disappear from police custody or extra-judicially executed were found to be cremated by the police as unidentified corpses.²⁰ Though in numerous cases the dead bodies laying in the police stations were well identified by their kins and relatives, but the police had deliberately denied the people to receive the corpses of their own.²¹

According to the United Nations International Covenant for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, an 'enforced disappearance' is considered to be, "the arrest, abduction or any other form of deprivation of liberty by agents of the state or by the persons or groups of persons acting with the authorization, support or consent of the state, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or by concealment of the whereabouts of the disappeared person, which place such a person outside the protection of law."²² Enforced disappearances in Punjab had often begun with illegal detention.²³ In the majority of cases, security forces abducted the victims in front of witnesses, often family members. Security forces did not officially acknowledge detentions. The family

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17. Ram Narayan Kumar, et al., *Enforced Disappearances, Arbitrary Executions and Secret Cremations: Victim Testimony and India's Human Rights Obligation* (An Interim Report), Committee for Coordination on Disappearances in Punjab, 1998, pp. 37-39.
 18. U.S. Bureau of Democracy (Human Rights and Labour), *India: Human Rights Practices 1993*, U.S. Department of State, January 31, 1994, p.3.
 19. Amnesty International, *Determining the Fate of the Disappeared in Punjab*, October 1995. p.2
 20. Human Rights Watch and Ensaaf, *India: Protecting the Killers - A Policy of Impunity in Punjab, India*, October 2007, pp. 29-30; Also see NHRC, *Annual Report, 2005-2006*, pp. 68-69.
 21. Ram Narayan Kumar, et al., *Reduced to Ashes: The Insurgency and Human Rights in Punjab*, South Asia Forum for Human Rights, Kathmandu, 2003, pp. 161-169.
 22. International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, adopted by the UN General Assembly resolution 61/177 on 20 December 2006, Article 2.
 23. Romesh Silva, et al., *Violent Deaths and Enforced Disappearances During the Counter-insurgency in Punjab* (A Preliminary Quantitative Analysis), Human Rights Data Analysis Group, Human Rights Program of Benetech and Ensaaf, January 26, 2009, pp. 15-16.

members were not provided any information regarding the causes of illegal detention and whereabouts of the victims. The persons arrested and detained were not presented before magistrate within 24 hours, as required by the Indian law under Article 22 of the Indian Constitution. In many cases, security forces extra-judicially executed victims and disposed off their bodies without acknowledging the deaths or informing family members of the whereabouts of the remains and residues of the deceased.²⁴ In several cases, the mothers have been still waiting for their young sons, the widows still hoping for their husbands, and the children still expecting their fathers to come back alive from the infringement of police, and do not believe that their dearly-loved have been murdered a long time ago, by the merciless security forces, just in an inhuman and unlawful manner. Thus, the cases of enforced disappearances in Punjab cannot be viewed only as violation of right to life and personal liberty of the victims under the provisions of Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, but must be acknowledged as a harsh crime against the family members and relatives of the deceased also. Many cases have been on the record showing trauma of enforced disappearances faced by the victims as well as their relatives.

Ram Singh Bling²⁵

Ajaib Singh, the uncle of Ram Singh Bling, was interviewed to be acquainted with the alleged enforced disappearance of Ram Singh Bling in the police custody, who was a journalist of *Aj di Awaz*, a daily newspaper published in Jalandhar. Ajaib Singh told in the interview that Ram Singh Bling was reportedly arrested near a police checkpoint in Bogiwal village on January 3, 1992. The family members, who saw him at the checkpoint on January 4, 1992, were not allowed to speak to him. A farmers' delegation, including Ajaib Singh went to the police checkpoint on January 6, 1992, to know about the reason of the arrest and detention of Ram Singh Bling. The police officials told that Ram Singh Bling had been detained temporarily. The officials of the checkpoint promised an enquiry into the causes of arrest. But Ram Singh had disappeared since that day. Ajaib Singh further disclosed that the sources within the police had informally described that he had died in the police custody. However the police did not acknowledge any detention of Ram Singh Bling.

Jagwinder Singh²⁶

A human rights lawyer Jagwinder Singh was picked up from his house in Kapurthala by a group of uniformed policemen on September 25, 1992. His family members and neighbours were the eye-witnesses of his abduction by police. However, the police, when contacted by the father of Jagwinder Singh along with other eminent persons of area, denied his arrest and detention. Although then Chief Minister and the Chief Secretary promised to intervene, Jagwinder Singh had disappeared and never returned.

Param Satinderjit Singh²⁷

On May 18, 1992, Amritsar police picked up Param Satinderjit Singh, a student

24. *Ibid.*, p.16.

25. Personal Interview of Ajaib Singh, uncle of Ram Singh Bling.

26. Indira Jai Singh, "A Tale of State Repression", *SikhSpectrum.com Quarterly* (Online Magazine), No. 14, November 20, 2002, p. 5.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

of Guru Nanak Dev University, from the university campus. He was forced to identify suspected sympathizers of the terrorist cause within the university, who were also picked up. The police brought Param Satinderjit Singh in the university campus several times for that purpose. The university students held a demonstration to protest against the abduction, and his father even went on a hunger strike. But Param Satinderjit Singh was not released. He did not return since that time. There was no trace of him thereafter.

Gurdev Singh Kaonke²⁸

Gurdev Singh Kaonke, a 44 years old former high priest of the Akal Takht, allegedly involved in the movement of terrorism, had disappeared from the police custody under the mysterious circumstances and believed by his family members and the neighbours as allegedly killed by the police. Hari Singh, son of Gurdev Singh Kaonke revealed in the interview that Gurdev Singh was arrested by the police from village Gurudwara on December 20, 1992. He was last seen in police custody on December 28, 1992, apparently in poor condition. His wife filed a petition in the Punjab and Haryana High Court which immediately sent a search party to locate him on January 2, 1993. The search was in vain. He was neither found in Jagraon police station nor in the Criminal Investigation Agency centre in town. On January 3, 1993, the police reported that Gurdev Singh Kaonke had escaped from police custody the previous night, when taken by police party to seize weapons near Karian village in Sidhwan Bet police station of Jagraon police district. The police claimed that their party was ambushed by terrorists and that during an exchange of fire Gurdev Singh Kaonke escaped with handcuffs on, under the darkness. However, he was never known to have returned to his family and even his body was never found. His relatives are of firm belief that he was tortured to death by the police.

Bagicha Singh²⁹

Bagicha Singh, resident of village Rajo-ke of Amritsar district was arrested by local police in September 1992. However the police authorities denied his arrest and detention when the family members approached to know the whereabouts of him. In May 1995, the Punjab and Haryana High Court ordered an inquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the whereabouts of Bagicha Singh. The High Court found that an inquiry report presented by the state government had been manipulated and there were reasonable grounds which proved the role of the police negative and suspected. However, all efforts went in vain and Bagicha Singh and his whereabouts could never be known by his family members.

Sukhpal Singh³⁰

Chhota Singh, father of Sukhpal Singh told in his personal interview that Sukhpal Singh alias Pali, a correspondent of the *Aj di Awaz* newspaper, was taken from his uncle's house in Chural Kalan village of Sangrur district, by Punjab Police on July

28. Personal Interview of Hari Singh, Son of Gurdev Singh Kaonke.

29. Amnesty International, *India : Determining the Fate of the Disappeared in Punjab*, October, 1995, pp.10-11.

30. Personal Interview of Chhota Singh, Father of Sukhpal Singh.

13, 1994, in the presence of eyewitnesses. Afterwards, the concerned police officials who had arrested Sukhpal Singh had denied his arrest and detention by the police. Chhota Singh sent a letter to the Supreme Court of India regarding the disappearance of Sukhpal Singh alias Pali from the police custody. On the orders of the Supreme Court, which treated a letter concerning his disappearance as a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), a magisterial inquiry in December 1994 found the Punjab Police responsible for his abduction. In March 1995, the Supreme Court issued notices to the Home Secretary, Punjab, Director General of Punjab Police and the Senior Superintendent of Police, Sangrur. However, the whereabouts of Sukhpal Singh were never known.

Barjinder Singh³¹

Bahadur Singh of village Khanjarwal, tehsil, Jagraon, district Ludhiana, told in his personal interview that his son named Barjinder Singh alias Pappu had disappeared from the police custody. His whereabouts were never known by the family members, after he was abducted by the Jagraon police on February 5, 1995, from his in-laws' house at village Sidhwan Kalan. Bahadur Singh petitioned senior police officers, including Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) of Ludhiana, Ranjan Gupta. But no further news was available about the whereabouts of Barjinder Singh. Bahadur Singh, the father, and other family members were of a firm belief that Barjinder Singh had been killed by the police. But the mother was still hopeful that his Pappu (nick name of Barjinder Singh) would meet him again.

Sukhwinder Singh³²

Sukhwinder Singh of village Chhan Noorowal, tehsil Ajnala, district Amritsar, was reported to have been picked up by the Lopoke police on January 7, 1995. According to witnesses including his wife who went to give him food, Sukhwinder Singh was severely tortured and was in a miserable condition in the police station. On February 1, 1995, the police claimed that Sukhwinder Singh had escaped by scaling the walls of police station. However he never returned home and neither could be re-produced by police.

Jaswant Singh Khalra³³

Jaswant Singh Khalra, a human rights activist and the General Secretary of the Human Rights Wing of Shiromani Akali Dal Party, disappeared after several witnesses saw him being picked up by Punjab Police outside his home in Amritsar.³⁴ However the police officials had totally denied that Khalra was arrested or detained. Jaswant Singh Khalra's wife, Mrs Paramjit Kaur Khalra, told in her personal interview that she had filed a *habeas corpus* petition in the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court ordered an investigation by CBI into the disappearance of Jaswant Singh Khalra. The CBI presented its investigation report to the Supreme Court identifying

31. Personal Interview of Bahadur Singh, Father of Barjinder Singh.

32. Asian Human Rights Commission, *Disappearances in Punjab*, 1999, pp. 3-4.

33. Personal Interview of Paramjit Kaur Khalra, wife of Jaswant Singh Khalra.

34. Ram Narayan Kumar, et al., *Enforced Disappearances, Arbitrary Executions and Secret Cremations: Victim Testimony and India's Human Rights Obligation* (An Interim Report), Committee for Coordination on Disappearances in Punjab, 1998, p. 61.

nine Punjab Police officials as responsible for the abduction and murder of Jaswant Singh Khalra and recommended their prosecution. The Government of Punjab granted sanction for the prosecution of the police officials.³⁵ The life imprisonment was awarded to DSP Jaspal Singh and Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police (ASI) Amarjit Singh in the Jaswant Singh Khalra murder case by CBI court of Patiala Additional Session Judge Bhupinder Singh in 2005 for abducting, torturing and killing Jaswant Singh Khalra.³⁶ Most embarrassing part of the whole incident is that both of the accused were awarded the prestigious Police Medal for Gallantry in 1994 by then President of India, for their brilliant services during the days of terrorism.

Jaswant Singh Khalra had lost his life just because he took a determined initiative to expose the human rights violations committed by the Punjab Police. He had been involved in a campaign to highlight the plight of hundreds of people who disappeared after being arrested by the Punjab Police during 1980s and early 1990s. Khalra had uncovered the proof of the disappearances and extrajudicial executions perpetrated by Punjab Police. The official municipal records and the registers maintained by the crematoria exposed by Khalra, demonstrated that police officers had secretly cremated thousands of bodies in three crematoria in district Amritsar claiming as unclaimed or unidentified.³⁷ In January 1995, he was instrumental in filing a petition with the Punjab and Haryana High Court that the bodies of several hundred people who disappeared in police custody between 1991 and 1993 had been cremated by Punjab Police in Amritsar district. The Police had claimed that the corpses were unclaimed or unidentified bodies.³⁸ The High Court had rejected his writ petition. Khalra was just about to file a writ petition in the Supreme Court of India, when he was abducted and made disappeared forever. After his death, the eminent human rights activists in Punjab had formed an apex body, the Committee for Coordination on Disappearances in Punjab (CCDP), to pursue the case of mass cremations, initiated earlier by Jaswant Singh Khalra. In 1995, the Committee for Information and Initiative on Punjab (CIIP) petitioned the Supreme Court to demand a comprehensive investigation into the case of mass cremations. The Supreme Court ordered the CBI to investigate the case of mass cremations. The CBI limited its investigation to three crematoria in Amritsar district, acknowledging 2,097 cases of secret cremations³⁹ of which 582 persons were all non-terrorists. The CBI further stated in the report to the Supreme Court that it had found *prima facie* evidence that the Punjab Police had secretly disposed off 984 bodies between 1990 and 1995, of most of the bodies were cremated during the period from 1992 to 1993.⁴⁰

35. Amnesty International, *India- A Mockery of Justice: The Case Concerning Disappearance of Human Rights Defender Jaswant Singh Khalra Severely Undermined*, April 1998, p.2.

36. Strip Convicted Cops of Medal: IHRO, *The Tribune*, November 20, 2005.

37. Human Rights Watch, *World Report 1997 : India*, www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6a8ad_28html, p.3.

38. Amnesty International, *Annual Report 1996 : India*, pp. 3-4.

39. Human Rights Watch and Ensaaf, *India : Protecting the Killers- A Policy of Impunity in Punjab, India*, October 2007, pp. 29-30.

40. Human Rights Watch, *World Report 1997: India*, p. 3.

The Supreme Court of India, after getting an investigation report from CBI, which had documented as many as 20,97 cases of illegally cremated people in only one district of Punjab, who were cremated as unidentified or unclaimed, referred the case to NHRC to have the matter examined in accordance with the law. To adjudicate the case of Punjab Mass Cremations, the NHRC was a *sui-generis* (using special powers for special matters) designate of the Supreme Court, appointed by the Supreme Court itself, in an order on December 12, 1996. The Supreme Court gave the *sui-generis* designation to NHRC, to carry out the Court's mandate. The NHRC was vested with all powers of the Supreme Court under Article 32, of the Indian Constitution, to hear the case of 'Mass Cremations in Punjab'. Moreover, in that case the Supreme Court had referred the whole matter to the Commission, with no territorial or other limits on the inquiry.⁴¹

On November 12, 1998, the NHRC examined the details of the CBI report related to the case.⁴² In 1999, the NHRC passed the order on the scope of the inquiry, confining its mandate to the alleged unlawful cremation of the 2,097 bodies in only three crematoria in Amritsar district only. It rejected the contention that the Commission should take a more expansive view under which enforced disappearances, extra-judicial executions and other allegations of human rights violations throughout the State would be investigated.⁴³ On August 18, 2000, the NHRC, apparently, endorsed the offer of the Punjab Government to compensate the 18 families of the victims with Rs. 100,000 each, without admission of wrongdoing or prosecution of officials. However, the offer of compensation without determination of liability was rejected by all 18 families.⁴⁴ The Commission, in November 2004, announced a reward of 2.5 lakhs to 109 families, again with no admission of liability or inquiry into the facts. Again, on October 9, 2006, the NHRC effectively awarded 1.75 lakhs compensation to the next of kin of 1,051 individuals for violation of the dignity of the dead.⁴⁵ Now the NHRC has completely closed the case of Punjab Mass Cremations.

Thus it has been established as an evident fact that the police and the security forces deployed in Punjab during the counter-terrorism operations had worked systematically to counter the insurgency in a totally illegal and inhuman manner. This is really embarrassing for the Indian criminal justice system that firstly the police and the security forces were provided total impunity to perform these brutal activities at mass level as a policy of counter-terrorism; Secondly when the cases of enforced disappearances and mass cremations were brought to the justice, the area of investigations was made limited to only one district of Punjab instead of investigating all cases concerning these violations throughout Punjab. Moreover,

41. Ram Narayan Kumar, et al., *Reduced to Ashes : The Insurgency and Human Rights in Punjab*, Vol. I, South Asia Forum for Human Rights, Kathmandu, Nepal, 2003, p. 11.

42. *The Tribune*, November 13, 1998.

43. Ensaaf, *The Punjab Mass Cremations Case: India Burning the Rule of Law*, January, 2007, p. 3.

44. Ram Narayan Kumar, et.al. *op. cit.*, p. 13.

45. Ensaaf, *National Human Rights Commission : Punjab Mass Cremations Case*, July 19, 2004, www.ensaaf.org/nhrc.html.

Punjab government's reckless and arrogant offers to pay a minimal compensation to the kins of victims without prosecuting the culprits and without soliciting any apology were humbly accepted by the NHRC. The way the governments as well as the adjudicating authorities have tackled the cases of enforced disappearances and mass cremations in Punjab have explicated an evident mockery of the Indian criminal justice system and its human rights protection mechanism.

'MARGINALS' IN SEXUALITY AND SOCIETY : COLONIAL PUNJAB

*Navtej Singh**

During the construction of societal norms, the issue of sexual behaviour remained central in the evolution of living patterns. The experience and knowledge gathered through span lead to the emergence of institution of marriage that gradually became widely prevalent and socially accepted. Yet despite the accedence, existence and continuation of this institution, other patterns of diversity also simultaneously remained in practice; although with equally shared involvement and responsibility of both men and women. This mechanism is interesting to evaluate in the sense that on the one hand the societal concept of "virginity", 'purity' were given preferences; on the other, the 'deviations' or 'diversifications' were neither condemned or rejected.

The paper tends to focus on some of the aspects related to this 'diversification' that how the society in general perceived the existence, the social categories involved in 'deviations' including the categories in terms of caste, class and religion, causes of necessity of its existence and the popular response. Broadly speaking, the focus is on the categories of the 'prostitutes' as sexual amusements alongwith the status of the 'elite' women in the context of sexual behaviours. To these two categories, the word 'marginals' has been assigned here. However, paucity of time limited the utilisation of source material and the study only to the colonial Punjab.

First category constituting the 'marginal' group was consisted of the girls who sang and danced at the popular fairs. During such occasions men showered coins whenever the girls rendered a particular touching verse or a suggestive dance movement in a confusion of tinkling ankle bells. Also when the girls cast longing glasses or flicked them with their long silk handkerchiefs, the farmers gathered there wished that they had not brought their wives with them, who were busy shopping somewhere but would soon come to drag them away.

During wedding times, there were arrangements for wine and dancing girls in the evenings.² Majority of these prostitutes, singing and *nautch* girls, belonged to the *Kanjar* community. They were not in the '*Jajmani*' system. Their men lived like drones, condemned to this because illegitimate birth of such low origin prevented them from going into any occupation. They were also Muslims, although the ranks

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1. Prakash Tandon, *Punjabi Saga, 1857-1987*, Viking, New Delhi, 1988, p. 60.

2. *Ibid.*

of prostitutes drew castaways and fallen women from all communities. There was no inter-marriage between them and other Muslims. The profession of singing, *nautch* and plain prostitution were graded in that order in their community, on account of the requisite skill and talent required. It took only good looks to make a prostitute, while dancing, despite the low-level to which it had dropped, still required some years training and a lithe figure; but singing needed both talent and intensive training of many years. The singing girls were the elite of their community. They were no common prostitutes, and gave their favours only when they wished.³

The courtesans lived in a separate lane of the town. They had no menfolk or children. They looked like other Muslim women, for they were usually Muslims, and the odd Hindu girl strayed into their fold adopted their customs and manners; yet they had tired faces and bold almost brazen, manners. They left their heads uncovered. In the mornings when other women looked fresh and clean after the bath these women looked haggard; and in the evenings when other women were tired and work-worn, they were all dressed and made up. Most of them were old, but some were young, mysteriously attractive, made up and decorated in a way that even the new brides did not dare; beautiful in a quite different way to the ordinary young women. These young ones did not seem to have the customary respect for the older women.⁴ Yet these women were not *parihas* or outcasts, they lived among people and were part of collective life. Like other castes they served a purpose and were not scorned because they served it. They were not accepted or respected, but neither were they treated with contempt or prudery.⁵

Whereas in the town of Gujrat courtesans lived in a small lane, in Lahore, it was a whole district, with bazaars, *gallis* and squares. It was called Hira Mandi that was quiet by day and deserted, but after the sun went down, it came into a dazzling and brilliant light. It was typical of the old Punjabi way of containing different aspects of life that even in Hira Mandi there were middle class residential areas in which people of all communities lived in streets adjacent to those of the courtesans.⁶

The routine of the courtesans began in the afternoon when the girls would wake up from their slumber and loll about the house comparing notes, sometimes cursing the race of man, sometimes praising a kind exception, or looking at their wardrobes and cosmetics. Some strayed down to the bazaar and walked about desultorily in their slept-in clothes, untidy in appearance, or stood in front of a *pan-biri* shop chewing *pan* and smoking. The *mirasi* musicians and the *kanjar* drones, also loafing about and taking the air, might make some rude cracks, which the girls were well able to answer; for after all they were the bread winners. Slowly they would drift back to start the evening toilet, which was a long and careful process.

A scrub or bath, frequently a shaving of the whole body hair, enjoined by

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

Muslim custom, powdering, rougeing, perfuming, hennaing, combing and plaiting, and a careful choice of clothes would finally be set off by passing the silver stick dipped in Kohl powder between the eyelids. All ready, they waited for instructions from the mother or the mistress, hoping against hope for that rare treat of an evening's assignment away from the house, at some men's quarters, or more exciting still, a secret rendezvous, when a girl might be taken in *parda* to remain unseen.

But the best treat of all was a journey away to somewhere in Kashmir in some other distant holiday place as an ostensible wife trying to look homely and domestic. However, hard their life they were naive and simple at heart, and while there was hope they prayed for a love affair, one that might even lead to marriage which might be rare but was not uncommon. When that happened they could make truly great wives.

Regarding their night lives it began when the evening darkened lights began to go up in the houses and balconies and the girls took their appointed places. There were four classes of houses, the very select ones of the well-known singing girls, those of the *nautch* girls, of the special courtesans, and of the common prostitutes. There were of course different grades with each category. The leading singing girls lived in luxurious homes and enjoyed a measure of respectability. Their names usually carried the courteous suffixes of *begum* or *banu*, and if they were Hindus, as they sometimes were, *bai*. They were frequently invited out to weddings and other functions; they sang for the recording companies, and later for the Lahore Radio, and still later as playback singers in films. To visit their houses was quite respectable.

They received visitors in the hall, a long, well-proportioned room with an ornate ceiling and painted walls. The floor was covered with thick quilted mattresses, spread with spotlessly white sheets. Against the walls there were white or coloured velvet cushions, with low carved tables and polished brass spittoons. Visitors would sit relaxed along the walls and were served *pan supari*. The singing girl would prepare the *pan* herself from her fretted silver box, and a maid would pass it round with scented betel-nut and little wads of cotton-wool dabbed in *attar* on a silver tray.⁷

The formalities of reception and the pleasantries over, the girl would sit surrounded by her musicians, usually three men, one playing the harmonium, another the *sarangi*, and the third the *tabla*. When she stopped singing, men uttered decorous *wah wahs* and offered silver coins and notes, which they would pass round the head of the girl before offering them..... The servants brought drinks, *sharbats* and whisky, and also the *amber*-coloured Rajput-Mughal liqueur.⁸

In their humbler homes the courtesan girls, many beautiful in their prematurely tired youth, would sit on the balconies under a strong light and look smilingly down at the men walking in the lane below. Among these girls, there were jasmine-

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 167-168.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 168.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 169-70.

tinted *Kashmirans*, wheat-skinned *Punjabanis*, grey-eyed *paharans*, delicately modelled *Delhiwallis*, taut and proud looking Rajasthanis, an occasional hawk-faced *Baluch* or a rosy, blue-eyed *Pathani*. They came from all over the north, from the mountain passes of Karakorum to the hills of Kumaon, from the Nagin of Srinagar to the lakes of Udaipur, dressed in their different clothes and hair-styles.

Men from below would look up, vacillating in their choice, till someone, would separate from the crowd and dive into the dark staircase, lit by a solitary earthenware lamp. As he entered into the glare of the reception room the girl left the balcony. She would come and sit near the man and they exchanged formal pleasantries, while the maid sat in a corner watching them ingratiatingly and shrewdly. The girl would size up what kind of a man he was and what to ask. Mostly it was a dull routine with a succession of bullying and blustering men, weak and old men, young and fumbling men, mean and demanding men, prudish and hypo-critical men, an endless monotony of types that the girl knew by sight, but occasionally there came a simple man, undemanding, generous, with deep emotions, reaching uncertainly for a fulfilment somewhere but not daring to ask for it, not willing to talk about it.

Instinctively, the girl would rise and tell the maid to close the shutters of the balcony, bolt the street door and go away. The understanding mother or mistress encouraged such occasional lapses into humanness because it freshened her and kept her going.¹⁰ These girls were superstitious and insisted on some kind of religious sanction. Most of them became *Shia* by faith so that by a simple invocation they would marry each man as they took him, and dissolve the marriage afterwards. The law of the *Shia* sect of Muslims permitted marriages of such temporariness.¹¹

In the houses of the *nautch* girls there was much gaiety, music and drinking. They were a merry, wily lot who loved dancing and enjoyed their life; they danced and made love because the rhythm in their limbs and their quivering bodies needed a relaxing fulfilment. There were some among them who became famous and kept exclusive establishments like the well-known singing girls, but somehow they never quite achieved their status.¹²

The houses of the common prostitutes were gay and busy, men coming and going all the time, and the girls exchanging ribald repartee with them. They were popularly known as the four *anna* and eight *anna wallis*. Their bodies exhausted, their looks faded prematurely, they provided just satisfaction. When they failed to do even that they joined the ranks of maids, except the few who were shrewed enough to become independent.¹³

In Sargodha town the singing and dancing girls were moved out of the city, first near the canal bank, and then still further away.¹⁴ The Hira Mandi, Lahore, also known as '*Tibbi*' was as much an institution of Lahore as Lahore was an

10. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

institution of Punjab. Glittering and gay, it had an honest immorality about it. No high principled finger was pointed, nor had any reformers suggested closing it down. It was there for those who needed it, and such needy ones came from all classes.¹⁵

There was another category of the 'Marginals' for sexual gratification. These were called the *bandis*, literally 'the tied', who were maids in the *harem* and were usually daughters of female servants. As young women they were often a prey to their masters; to the young in pursuit of their initial adventures, and to the old as 'tender morsels' for a change. They would beget children from the family and were usually married off to men servants, often the sons of *bandis*. The senior ladies of the family tolerated the institution, partly because it was the traditional way of providing cheap household labour, tied to the home because it belonged nowhere else; but they must have seen in it also the additional advantage of keeping the young men from experimental liaisons with growing cousins or from straying out to the courtesans and bringing disease to the cousins whom they would marry in due course.

Mixed with members of the family, and with their blood continually freshened from outside, the *bandis* were usually good looking and robust. Curiously, they seldom formed any long liaisons or exercised any influence upon the men in the family. There were cases of women, even courtesans, rising to positions of great influence upon rulers, but one rarely heard of a *bandi* rising to the position of eminence.¹⁶

A matron with the help of a wise old *bandi* might arrange to place a young woman in the way of an exploring adolescent. There is reference to one unsuspecting school boy of rich class talked of his first affair in terms of a great exploit with this 'reluctant' innocent *bandi*. Later as the emboldened youth really began to exploit, when he visited his estates, the village girls would be kept in *parda* for fear of his depredations. If one of them took his fancy he might marry her and put her behind the high walls of one of his many palaces and mansions, or having had his fill of her, he might return her to the family with some money.

The family could gnash their teeth if they liked, but they could do no more. Being poor and simple, they accepted their fate and were happy if the girl was kept in the *harem*. Occasionally the patrician would cast his discretion to the wind and show illicit interest in a woman in one of the other households. Such an insult would be avenged by intrigue, not openly, but usually by poisoning. The little wheels of intrigues would move fast but quietly on such occasions, for it the slightest scent of the plot reached the threatened party, wheels on his side would move faster still.¹⁷

A narrative related to a patrician of some times back who saw one of his young companions coming surreptitiously from the *harem*. He declared that very day that while in the post he had hunted wild animals with his dogs, on the following day he was going to try the variation of hunting a man. The whole

15. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

retinue was commanded to witness the spectacle which, everyone knew, would consist of burying the man upto his waist and setting the dogs on him. The young aide immediately scented the danger, and as it was now his life against the master he moved with a speed born of despair.

With threat and bribery he and his friends reached a point where hatred and frustration had simmered for many years. Although this deep wound had healed on the surface and was forgotten by others, now given the chance, with just the right pressure from someone who had remembered its existence, it gushed and took its long-stored poison in one dart to the masterful victim.

The story went that before the night watch went on duty within barely six hours of the uttering of the threat, the great man lay gasping for life, begging for water, but help had already been ruthlessly barred. The heir was not altogether sorry to succeed the next day to the riches of the estate, innocent though he was of the misdeed. The windfall of power banished any thought of investigation and revenge. Prudence also demanded a discreet acceptance, for a re-opening might lead to another desperate throw of the dice, and this time perhaps also a bid for power. Securely guarded in high-walled *harems*, the women on these occasions worked side by side with men with even greater boldness and cunning.¹⁸

Yet, women of the *harem* were well guarded from public gaze. Even if they were to visit some other place, the town criers would went about with their drums, and wherever they stood and beat them a crowd would collect to hear that on the afternoon of the appointed day no one should be on the road, which led from the palace to the railway station, not even on the connecting roads. As far as the eye could see on this route, no human being would be visible, not even a woman, in case that could be a ruse. People whose houses even distantly overlooked the road were told to stay inside the rooms on the ground floors. All these precautions were taken notwithstanding the fact that the ladies were in any case going to travel in *parda* cars, completely screened from outside.¹⁹

Two hours before the appointed time the police would begin to clear the roads and order people to shut all doors and windows which could be seen from the roadside. They would blew whistles and shout at anyone they saw from the road. Soon a deserted silence would descend, of a kind that was unimaginable. It would be eerie because it was in broad day light and carried with it a threat of the dungeon and even death. Suddenly the police whistles would begin to blow, and as each man sounded the signal he would turn about and stand motionless with his back to the road and his head bowed. A cavalcade of cars would rush down the road with their special dark glass windows up and thick cotton sheets tied around them, exposing only the windscreens for the drivers to see through. The partitions between the driver and the rear compartment in which the ladies sat was of course also to be screened by a blind, and so was the rear view window by the sheet outside. As the procession would pass out of view the policemen would blew their whistles again and life would begin to creep back to the roads.²⁰

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 157-58.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

20. *Ibid.*

At the railway station the cars would drive up to a separate *parda* siding which had been built for the purpose with high walls on both sides. The cars would go up the platform to the waiting private saloons with closed venetian shutters. Out of the front cars would rush some *bandis* to hold sheets and form a *parda* lane between each car and the railway coach. In the meantime the motor drivers would walk away out of sight. When the ladies reached safely in the compartments, the doors would be closed and police guards would stand watching outside with their backs turned and heads down. Shortly, a railway engine would come and take the coaches away. At the other end the same exercise would be performed to take the ladies from station to the palace, and once they would be inside, their annual excursion would be over. It would be the only 'outing' they could enjoy.²¹

On the other hand, the sisters of a 'Nawab', according to custom, were not permitted to marry. In the north the word for wife's brother, *Sala*, had somehow become a term of abuse. The 'Nawabs' therefore, considered it an unbearable insult to become a *sala* to someone; they would rather not marry their sisters. But it was a risk to keep them in the palaces for fear of some scandal arising, and they were, therefore, banished to an old inaccessible fort in the desert. There, under a heavy guard, they lived their long lives like prisoners, lost to the world and looking back to their childhood, the only short spell of happiness, they had ever tasted. Relations rarely came to see them, and thus condemned could only have received scant attention from the fort authorities. But stories went about of strange happenings in this fort of the living dead.²²

Thus, the examination of evidence related to 'marginals' in sexuality reveal that under the colonial setting there existed in Punjab three categories of this 'marginality' stratification. The first group constituted the singing, dancing and the courtesan girls. They belong to the *Kanjar* community of Muslims, but there existed women from other castes and religions including the Hindus. This institution of sexual gratification and amusement was widely prevalent in prominent towns and cities of Punjab where the females came not only from within the province but also other parts of India, especially the northern India.

Geographically, their locations of settlements were usually outside the towns in particular localities. Their condition was neither miserable nor respectable, yet was socially accepted and they catered to the needs of all classes of men; young and old. The second category of sexual marginality was consisted of the *bandis* and were the preserve of the rich and elite belonging to the ruling principalities. Here both the very young and the old experimented with them. Though they were well-protected as compared to the first category, yet there were involved certain kinds of intrigues leading even to the murder of the powerful personality. In such conspiracies the connivance of these '*harem*' women was actively involved. On the other, the women of the ruling class were strictly prohibited from the public gaze and kept under strict surveillance.

The third category of 'marginality' was comprised of the daughters of the

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 158-159.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

ruling elites. They were not allowed to marry due to existence of a particular tradition called the insult. When they grew young, they were expelled from the palaces and dispatched to certain lonely places under strict vigilance. Yet the demand of their bodies lead to develop illegitimate sexual relationships, though the elite pretending to be ignorant of such prevalence as it was not happening before their eyes. This hypocritical perception was not merely dubious in character but equally tyrannical.

Hence, the actuality of these 'marginal' group in sexuality of society blast the 'myth' of purity of race; rather establishing the continuation of diversity of patterns in sexual behaviours for either gratification or amusement alongwith the presence of other sort of 'marginality' discussed in 'Pattern of Sexuality in Colonial Punjab : 1857-1947'.²³ The very existence of such diversity became basis of new formations of social relationships culminating in societal pressures giving rise to a variety of ramifications.

23. Navtej Singh, 'Pattern of Sexuality in Colonial Punjab, 1857-1947', *The Panjab Past and Present*, October 2008, pp. 175-179.

SATI : SOCIO-LEGAL ASPECT

*Pushpinder Kaur Dhillon**

India has been for a long period in history an orthodox society at its core and religious and superstitious beliefs have continued to persist in chronic forms. These belief system have intimated almost all the aspects of social life including the institution of matrimony. There has prevailed a strong sense of the inviolable and immutable nature of the institution of marriage. Husband and wife are considered to be inseparable, similar to one soul living in two bodies and therefore if husband dies the wife too must not live. This social ideology has a strong patriarchal and chauvinistic bias as the opposite is not agreed upon by the fundamentalists. The rule has limited application as it has been forcibly or coercively imposed on widows only. Husband dying in the funeral pyre of the wife is a forbidden thought. *Sati* system has its provenance in the *Jauhar* system which was pre-dominantly prevalent among Kshatriya caste named Rajputs. The practice of *Jauhar*, prevalent in Rajasthan and M.P., was collective suicide of a community.

The *Sati* is a conservative practice of widow immolation. *Sati* is an intriguing practice of Indian womanhood, carrying both the association of a barbaric society and of the mystique of the Hindu woman who "voluntarily" and "cheerfully" mounted the pyre of her husband.¹

Woman has been subjected to institutionalized forms of oppression, subjugation and violence since the beginning of social and political history. She has also been subjected to exploitation, neglect, humiliation, assaults and subordination in patriarchal structures both in domestic and social domains. There is an inherent dichotomy in the fact that while women are theoretically idolized as well as idealized by religious discourses they are meted out the most unjust and exploitative treatment in real life. Though she is born as a human being yet she is made conscious of her subservience in all the areas of human experience and made to regard herself as sub human.

Woman has to perform different roles in society from cradle to grave. She is encumbered with an onerous responsibility of negotiating different social and familial roles like those of the daughter, sister, wife and mother. The most daunting part is that of the wife and if unfortunately she is rendered widow her problems get multiplied.

In traditional Indian set up a widow suffers unconscionable degradation, distress and discrimination at the hands of her family. In some rigidly conservative and

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1. Dr. S.R., *Women and Law*, Asia Law House, Hyderabad, 2005, p.208.

primitive set ups, she is coerced into committing "Sati" by her family members. This is the most horrendous manifestation of domestic violence which can be inflicted on an individual by her family under the aegis of society. She is ordained by socially sanctioned discriminatory practices to burn (herself) alive in the flames of her husband's funeral pyre.

The term 'Sati' means the Hindu practice of widow (self) immolation; the burning of the living widow with the corpse of her husband. The word *Sati* in Sanskrit is a feminine noun, meaning a good woman, a true wife but when understood in the context of Indian widows, it means a woman who sacrifices herself on the funeral pyre for the love of her husband. *Sati* is of two types :²

- (1) Sahagamana or keeping company (sahamarana, dying together) or
- (2) Dying without the dead body, i.e., when a widow burns herself with garments, slippers, walking stick or with some other relics of the deceased.

Sati as a term is used both for a woman who burns herself and for the practice or rite of burning a widow with the corpse of her husband.

Sati and *Savitri* along with other similar characters in Hindu mythology were propagated as exemplars and paragons of devotion to their husbands and symbolized the ideal Indian wife who would do everything for her husband. There is no evidence that the woman equated with or called *Sati*, in Hindu religious literature, ever committed suicide on her dead husband's pyre. Therefore the custom of burning the widow on her dead husband's pyre probably did not evolve from religious background but from social background.³

The mythological allusions however seem to have been subjected to inaccurate and erroneous interpretations. Through a systematic and gradual process of revisions of the original mythological account people were made to believe that a woman could be a true wife only if she would try to snatch her husband back from the jaws of death and by the same logic she must not part company with her dead husband.

Hindu scriptures, however, do not advocate the practice of burning widows. According to *Rig Veda*,⁴ a widow was to be summoned to leave her dead husband and unite with the brother as his wife.

Manu Smriti too prohibits killing of the widow and instead suggests disfiguring her, shaving off her head, removing her ornaments, specially those symbolic of being bride and ensuring that the widow wore plain clothes. The *Dharmasutras* and *Dharmashastras* pronounce that widowhood is the consequence of past *karma* and thus cannot be construed to amount to advocacy of the practice of *Sati*.⁵

The *Atharvaveda* does give some hint. The *Shankha* and *Hariti Smritis* have high praise for the *Sati*.⁶

2. Dutta, V.N., *Sati Widow Burning in India*, Manohar Publication, New Delhi, 1988, p.1.

3. *Sati - The burning of widow*, <http://adaniel.tripod.com/Sati.htm>.

4. *Rigveda* X: 18: 8.

5. Supra note 3, p.31.

6. Tripathi Chandra Bala, *The Evolution of Ideals of Womanhood in Indian Society*, 2005, p.143.

Practice of *Sati* amongst the Sikhs was an aberration and contrary to the teachings of Sikh Gurus. The *Adi Granth*, the religious and moral code of the Sikhs, forbade *Sati*. Guru Amardass (1552-1574) condemned the practice of *Sati* saying:

ਸਤੀਆ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਜੋ ਮੜਿਆ ਲਗਿ ਜਲੰਨਿ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਜਿ ਬਿਰਹੇ ਚੋਟ ਮਰਨਿ ॥

ਭੀ ਜੋ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀ ਅਨਿ ਸੀਲ ਸੰਤੋਖਿ ਰੰਹਿਨ ॥

ਸੇਵਨਿ ਸਾਈ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਿਤ ਉਠਿ ਸੰਮਾਲੰਨਿ ॥

i.e., "They are not *Satis* who burn themselves on the spouses' pyre. Nanak, the true *Satis* are those who die from the shock of separation. They also ought to be considered as *Satis* who live in charity and contentment, who serve and when rising ever remember their lord (husband) daily."⁷

Despite the fundamental opposition of Sikh tenets to the very idea of *Sati* Sikhism has not remained completely unassociated with the practice. Thus, as historical accounts establish, was primarily due to the influences of contiguous relations and cultural practices prevailing in India alongside Sikhism. There are historical records which show that during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, there were sporadic instances of *Sati* among Sikhs. Prominent among them is the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh himself when as many as eleven women committed *Sati* along with his body. Later on when Ranjit Singh's son Maharaja Kharak Singh died, one of his wives of Rajput lineage committed *Sati* along with his body. The wives of Nau Nihal Singh and Maharaja Sher Singh also committed *Sati*. There is mention of several other *Satis* among the families of Sikh *Misals* after Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

The *Sati* system was not confined to India. This custom was prevalent and acceptable in many ancient communities such as the Egyptians, Greeks, Goths and Scythians. In these cultures, a dead king was buried with his mistresses or wives, servants and belongings so that they could continue to serve him in the next world.⁸

The custom of *Sati* was probably brought to India by the Scythian invaders of India.⁹ The Scythians were warrior tribes and after their assimilation in the Indian society, they accorded the status of warrior castes in Hindu religious hierarchy. Rajput clans are believed to have originated from them. Later on other castes staking claim to warrior status or higher class also adopted this custom. Once a custom takes root, it gets permanently engendered in the warp and woof of social fabric.

In different communities of India, *Sati* was committed for different reasons:

- (1) Women who committed *Sati* were conferred posthumous honours and their families were given place of pride.
- (2) Temples or other religious shrines were built to commemorate the *Satis*.
- (3) Where the ruler was married to more than one wife one of his wives was

7. Guru Amar Dass, Shalok Mahala 3, Var Suhi, "*Adi Granth*", Golden Offset Press, Gurdwara Ramdas Sahib, Amritsar, p.788.

8. *Sati - The burning of widow*, <http://www.indianchild.com>.

9. Supra note 2.

selected to commit *Sati*. The choice was based on the preference of the dead king. The wife who was known to be preferred by the late king over the other members of the *harem* was chosen to commit *Sati*. This was considered to be an honour for the chosen wife and disgrace for others.

- (4) Another important reason for the widow to embrace death by immolation on her dead husband's pyre was to save herself from the vicissitudes of widowhood. A widow seldom inspired any sympathy.
- (5) The agony of few minutes on the pyre was probably a less painful experience than the prolonged torture of mind and body during widowhood. Rather than bear the agony of daily torture on account of perpetual widowhood the women preferred to die.
- (6) The relatives of the widow, in order to usurp the property acquired by her in succession, forced her to the funeral pyre.

As per the injunctions of sacred writings, voluntary death is forbidden to women in the following cases:

- (1) The pregnant woman ;
- (2) The suckling mother ;
- (3) Woman of loose moral ;
- (4) State of uncleanness and ;
- (5) Adolescence.

Other than in these cases, every widow was obliged to burn herself, unless she reconciled to the life of a slave in her own house and to perform the meanest offices, or to abase herself as a prostitute in the public place, ostracised from all respectable society and forsaken by her family.¹⁰

A number of British officials prohibited *Sati* within their jurisdiction but as a policy, the government took no overarching policy decisions for the prohibition of the practice.

The credit of stopping the practice of *Sati* goes to Lord William Bentick, the Governor-General of the East India Company. He made his intention known through a memorandum dated 8 November 1829. The reactionaries, traditionalists and anti-modernists posed resistance to this proposed change. But early modernists like Dawarkanath Tagore (grandfather of Ravinder Nath Tagore) and the most prominent reformer, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, supported reform and made a compelling petition to the Governor-General to implement his plans.

It was in 1829 that Lord William Bentick with the help of Raja Ram Mohan Roy introduced a formal legislation prohibiting *Sati*, called "Indian Sati Regulation Act, 1829", which had immediate and abiding impact. Aiding and abetting a sacrifice whether voluntary or not was deemed to be a culpable homicide and the court had the discretion to decide the punishment after referring to the nature and circumstances of the case.¹¹

In the entire British policy on *Sati* in Indian states, Lord Harding's proclamation of 1847 proved highly significant as it strongly advocated, "not to continue the

10. Myneni, S.R., *Woman and Law*, Asia Law House, Hyderabad, 2005, p.208.

11. Sinha Shruti, "Trial by Fire: *Sati* in Modern India", in *Criminal Law Journal*, 2006, p.132.

practice of *Sati* among the rulers and other native states in alliance with the paramount power of British India.”¹²

The instant effect of Harding's proclamation was that before the end of the year Kashmir, Punjab, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Jhalawar, Pratapgarh, Rewa, Dumgarpur, Banswara, Indore, Kota, Bundi, Gwalior and Jhansi prohibited *Sati*.¹³

Though Harding made quite a number of states, issue prohibitory orders on *Sati*, it was Dalhousie who succeeded in extirpating it. Dalhousie was resolute in his commitment to prohibit *Sati*. He had little patience with excuses, vacillations, resistance on the part of native rulers against the prohibitory orders or any other form of procrastination towards the idea of complete eradication of *Sati*. He demanded absolute and immediate compliance. Dalhousie issued stringent orders on 20 January 1854.¹⁴

The drafters of the Indian Penal Code in 1860, under the East Indian Company, diluted the severity of the penal provisions on *Sati*. *Sati*, as a voluntary act got included in the general provision on suicide and such suicides were put outside the scope of legal definition of murder by inserting an Exception 5 to Section 300, which says that :

“Culpable homicide is not a murder when the person whose death is caused, being above the age of 18 years, suffers death or takes the risk of death with his own consent.”

Sati, for the said Section, is an offence only if the act appears to be involuntary. However, the act of committing *Sati* can be punished for culpable homicide¹⁵ and for abetment of suicide.¹⁶ This act is also a cognizable offence under other provisions relating to offences affecting life covered under Chapter XVI of the Code such as attempt to murder¹⁷ and attempt to culpable homicide.¹⁸

There were some other laws prior to the enactment of the Commission of *Sati* (Prevention) Act, 1987, to address this problem. Till 1987, there were three laws in force to check the menacing and inhuman practice of *Sati*. Two out of these which were passed during the British times were the following:

- (1) Bengal Sati Regulation Act, 1829, and
- (2) Tamil Nadu Sati Regulation, 1830.

Section 306 and Section 309 of Indian Penal Code also provided for punishment for abetment to suicide as also for attempt to commit suicide respectively. These also included the punishment for commission of *Sati*.¹⁹

The ignominious incident of *Sati* in Deorala in Rajasthan where a young 18 years old widow Roop Kanwar allegedly committed *Sati* on the pyre of her husband

12. NAI, AP Cons, 31 January 1842, No. 96.

13. NAI, AP Cons, 10 January 1846, No. 280.

14. Supra note 16, pp.174-175.

15. Section 299, IPC.

16. Section 306, *Ibid*.

17. Section 307, *Ibid*.

18. Section 308, *Ibid*.

19. Dr. Devinder Singh, *Human Rights: Women and Law*, Allahabad Law Agency, Haryana, 2005, p.120.

shocked the nation out of its modernist illusions and complacencies made it imperative to review the existing law and its implementation. Concomitant to this, the Rajasthan Sati Prevention Act, 1987, was passed. In the wake of this dastardly incident in the latter half of the 20th century there was a furore both inside and outside the Parliament for the enactment of a more robust and deterrent central law to provide for the effective prevention of this social evil so that the practice or its social valorisation is discouraged in states where there is no law for the prevention of *Sati* or its glorification. Although the offence of attempt to commit suicide as contained in Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code has been upheld by various High Courts to hold the commission of *Sati* punishable under the provision, the sentence provided in that Section does not provide any punishment for the glorification of *Sati* subsequent to the commission of *Sati*. It was, therefore, considered imperative to enact an overarching central law which would have national applicability in the entire territory of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Thus the Commission of *Sati* (Prevention) Act, 1987, was enacted on 3rd January 1988 to deter not only the commission of *Sati* but also its glorification and for matters connected therewith. Prior to enactment of this Act, there were only three laws in force in the states namely the Rajasthan *Sati* (Prevention) Act, 1987, Bengal Sati Regulation, 1829 and Tamil Nadu *Sati* Regulation, 1830.

Glorification in relation to *Sati*, whether such *Sati* was committed before or after the commencement of this Act, includes among other things:

- (i) the observance of any ceremony or the taking out of a procession in connection with the commission of *Sati*, or
- (ii) the supporting, justifying or propagating the practice of *Sati* in any manner; or
- (iii) the arranging of any function to eulogise the person who has committed *Sati*; or
- (iv) the creation of trust, or the collection of funds, or the construction of a temple or other structure or the carrying on of any form of worship or the performance of any ceremony there at, with a view to perpetuate the honour of, or to preserve the memory of a person who has committed *Sati*.²⁰

So glorification in relation to *Sati* implies observance of any ceremony, staging or taking out a procession, extending support to or propagating the ceremony to commemorate the act of *Sati*, or of any other function to eulogise the person who had committed *Sati*. Creation of any trust, the collection of funds for the construction of any temple or structure in order to consecrate the unlawful tradition of *Sati* or the memory of a person who committed *Sati* also amounts to glorification. The act of glorification of *Sati* is punishable with a minimum imprisonment of one year, which may extend to seven years and with a minimum fine of five thousand rupees, which may extend to thirty thousand rupees.²¹

Attempt to commit *Sati* is punishable and Section 3 runs as follows :

Notwithstanding anything contained in the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860) whoever attempts to commit *Sati* and does any act towards such commission shall

20. Section 2(1)(b) of the Commission of *Sati* (Prevention) Act, 1987.

21. Section 5 of the Commission of *Sati* (Prevention) Act, 1987.

be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine or with both:

Provided that the special court trying an offence under this Section shall, before committing any person, take into consideration the circumstances leading to the commission of the offence, the act committed, the state of mind of the person charged of the offence at the time of the commission of the act and all other relevant factors.²²

The offence of attempt to commit *Sati* is punishable under the same section i.e. Section 309 of IPC as is provided for the offence of an attempt to commit suicide. This provision is of immense importance because the Commission of *Sati* (Prohibition) Act, 1987 is elaborate and unsimplistic in its provisions and undertakes to, before convicting the accused, study the circumstances leading to the attempt. A sociological analysis of the *Sati* problem will reveal that in most cases, the widow or the woman is compelled to commit *Sati* and she will not be in a fit state of mind or will be labouring under a state of intoxication or stupefaction or other cause impacting the exercise of her free will.

The Act makes express provisions regarding what amounts to abetment of *Sati*.²³ Explanation under the Section clearly classifies the various categories of acts where the commission of the act will amount to the offence of abetment of *Sati*. The abetment of *Sati* is considered to be a very grievous offence; therefore, express provisions are made in the Act of 1987 as such. Sub-section (1) of Section 4 provides that where the *Sati* has been committed and the offence has been directly or indirectly abetted by any person, he is liable for the murder of the woman who has committed *Sati* and is liable to the punishment of death or imprisonment for life and also will be liable to fine. As the commission of *Sati* is considered to be a very reprehensible act and it is made equivalent to murder of the woman. In sub-section (2) where woman has made attempt to commit *Sati*, the abettor who has directly or indirectly abetted the attempt of such offence, shall be punishable with the imprisonment of life and also be liable to fine.

Where any person is prosecuted for the offence of abetment of *Sati* or the abetment of an attempt to commit *Sati*, the onus of proving that he had not committed the offence shall be on him.²⁴ The person who is convicted of an offence of abetment of *Sati* will be disqualified from inheriting the property of the person who commits *Sati*.²⁵ This provision however, violates one of the fundamental premises of criminal jurisprudence that the accused is innocent till proved guilty. Such a departure from the accepted tenets of jurisprudence could have found justification in the case of crimes of a private nature like rape and wife murder. It appears to have been totally unwarranted in the case of *Sati* where the crime is committed in open

22. Section 3 of the Commission of *Sati* (Prevention) Act, 1987.

23. Section 4, *Ibid*.

24. Section 16 provides: Where any person is prosecuted of an offence under Section 4, the burden of proving that he had not committed the offence under the said Section shall be on him.

25. Section 18 of the Commission of *Sati* (Prevention) Act, 1987.

public demonstration and sometimes even to publically uphold and defend the patriarchal ideology behind *Sati*. The irony of the Act also lies in the fact that in its overzealous espousal of the need to protect the women's rights, the Act stipulates punishment to the victim.

Section 306 of IPC made provisions regarding punishment of the persons who abetted the commission of the offence of *Sati*. This Section of the IPC provided for abetment of suicide by a person. *Sati* in its basic nature was thought to be a form of suicide by a widow after her husband was dead. Under Section 306 of IPC cases relating to *Sati* were decided by the various High Courts. In *Queen v. Mohit Pandey*,²⁶ a married woman whose husband had died committed *Sati* along with the corpse of her husband. In the sequence of events preceding the act of self immolation this woman prepared herself with the active involvement of her step sons. She remained on the funeral pyre of her husband while her stepsons strengthened her resolve by advising her to chant '*Ram Ram*'. One of the accused persons admitted that he had suggested to the woman that if she said '*Ram Ram*' she would become '*Sati*'. In the verdict it was held that since the above facts established active connivance of all the accused persons in abetment of the suicide all were liable for abetment by conspiracy. Similarly, where the accused persons did not stop or dissuade a widow who had declared her intention to commit *Sati* and on the contrary contributed through personal involvement by actively preparing the pyre or supplying her *ghee* which she poured on herself and the body of her husband, in such cases also they were held to be guilty under this section for abetting widow to commit suicide. Any superstitious or fortaean belief that some superhuman powers of the husband or any other power would invite divine wrath or a curse was not accepted as defence.²⁷

In the case of *Kinder Singh v. Emperor*,²⁸ it was indicated by evidence that the accused desired that the woman should commit *Sati* and made elaborate preparations for cremation of the dead body in the village itself and not at the usual cremation ground. This was done with the intention of ensuring common participation of the masses. The cremation ground was far away and several villagers had gravitated to witness the commission of *Sati* in the village itself. Thus the venue was changed. The first accused was the head of the deceased's family and the others the relations. It was held that the offence of abetment of suicide under Section 306, Indian Penal Code was committed by the accused. Similarly, in the case of *Tej Singh v. State*,²⁹ the accused were members of the crowd who comprised the funeral procession which wound its way from the house of the deceased to the cremation ground while the widow of the deceased was walking at the head of the procession with a known intention to commit *Sati* and they were raising the slogans of, "*Sati Mata Ki Jai*", and as the procession proceeded, about 100 or 150 members of the crowd cordoned off the police in order to make it impossible for them to intercede and pre-empt the

26. (1871) 3 NWP 316.

27. *Emperor v. Ram Dayal*, (1913) 36 All 26.

28. AIR 1933 All 160.

29. AIR 1958 Raj 169.

act of *Sati*. It was in this instigative and collectively engineered conditions that funeral pyre was set on fire with the widow sitting on it. It was held that all those persons who joined that procession were aiding the widow in committing *Sati*.

Sati is not seen as a contravention of any law in Bundelkhand. In fact, the *Sati* is worshipped here as a divine power. *Sati* temples and platforms where women consigned themselves to the flames of their husband's funeral pyres are common.

In one of the most recent instances of *Sati*, on 7 August 2002, Kuttu Bai in Tamoli Patna village of Panna district of Madhya Pradesh was forcibly made to sit on the funeral pyre of her husband by thirty accused persons.³⁰ A criminal case under Sections 302/201, 120-B of IPC and Section 7 of the Act had been registered at the Sareha Police Station against all accused persons. The case had been charge sheeted on 30-9-2002 against the accused persons in the special court set up under the provision of the Commission of *Sati* (Prevention) Act, 1987 at Sagar. After the instant case it was found that implementation of the law on *Sati* is defective. Quite peculiarly, in this case police was given prior information about the possibility of women planning *Sati*, two police personnel patrolled the village and found a large concourse of 1000 men near the funeral pyre. Feeling threatened that the law enforcers will apprehend them, people started pelting stones at the police officials and injured them. The police could have averted this incident if it had acted promptly and reached the village with full force.

In 2005, Ram Kumari, a Brahmin woman from Banudarhi village in Banda district of U.P., reportedly committed *Sati*.

In 2006, Janakrani, aged 45 years jumped into the pyre of her husband, Prem Narayan, after family members had left the cremation ground following completion of the last rites, in Tulsipur village of Sagar district in Madhya Pradesh.³¹

In 2008, probably one of the most recent instances of '*Sati*' a woman named Lalmati Verma consigned herself to the flames of the cremation pyre of her husband Shivnandan Verma in the village of Chechar, district Raipur in Chhatisgarh. It is significant that the lady was 71 years old and her act was by all accounts voluntary.³²

The collector or district magistrate has been invested with the authority to prohibit the progress of any action which is perceived to be directed towards the commission of *Sati* in any area if he is of the opinion that *Sati* is likely to be committed in such area.

The Act, among other things, empowers the district collector or district magistrate to prohibit certain acts,³³ remove certain temples or structures,³⁴ and seize certain properties³⁵ which have been collected or acquired for the purpose of glorification of the commission of *Sati*. The Act also provides that the offences under the Act shall be triable only by a special court constituted under the Act. Further, the state governments have been empowered to appoint special public

30. *The Indian Express*, Bhopal Edition, August 8, 2002.

31. *The Tribune*, 22 August 2006.

32. www.merineews.com, October 13, 2008.

33. Section 6.

34. Section 7.

35. Section 8.

prosecutions.³⁶ The special court constituted³⁷ under the Act has the power to forfeit the funds and property of a person convicted under the Act.

The special court on *Sati* prevention cum-sessions court in Jaipur gave its judgement acquitting on 31 January 2004 all accused of glorification of *Sati* of the charges that were filed 16 years ago in Roop Kanwar's case of 1987.³⁸ The case is indicative of an unfortunate trend wherein the best cases can be jeopardized by delays, flawed presentation and compilation of evidence and lastly convoluted legal interpretations. The judgement is full of loopholes and ambivalences. There has been a public reaction and several groups have been protesting against the Government of Rajasthan and clamouring for remedial action to rectify this miscarriage of justice.

The debatable point is whether *Sati* is a formalised religious observance or ritual or it is merely a custom. Religion by its intrinsic nature promotes peace, amity, brotherhood, love of mankind. Religion does not propagate killing or self-sacrifice of a living human being due to intimate temporal or spiritual attachment. The act of self-immolation has been by no means a part of religion, it has only been a socially constructed custom prevalent from time immemorial which is neither divinely sacrosanct nor pristine and eternal. Customs can be understood merely as habits which a people have accepted and adopted over time without critically examining them. They may also be looked upon as patterns of conduct which are generally observed by classes or groups of people on long term basis giving them an appearance of immutable social laws. Customs by their very nature are recurring acts which through prolonged and repeated occurrence acquire a shape that gives rise to a presumption that such type of acts will continue. However, if customs are not in consonance with established fundamental values in a legal order, they may be controlled.³⁹

As Article 21 of the Constitution of India states, "No person shall be deprived of life and personal liberty except according to procedure established by law." This means that no religion can enjoin upon a woman the duty to sacrifice herself along with her deceased husband. Besides she is absolutely free to disobey, defy and challenge religious or customary sanction to that effect, due to the existence of personal liberty clause. As mentioned earlier, *Sati* is merely a custom and not a part of religion. The Constitution provides only freedom of religion. Any customary practice although in existence from time immemorial may be interfered with by a suitable legislative enactment.⁴⁰ In *Dasrath Ram v. State*,⁴¹ the Supreme Court observed that under the Constitution of India it is provided that any customary right or practice can be abrogated if it enters into a conflict with the fundamental rights.

36. Section 10.

37. Section 9(2).

38. Sinha Shruti, "Trial by Fire: *Sati* in Modern India", *Criminal Law Journal*, 2006, p.135.

39. Dr. Davinder Singh, *Human Rights: Women and Law*, Allahabad Law Agency, Haryana, 2005, p.123.

40. Shyed Kumar Mukherjee, "Socio-Legal Justification of *Sati* (Prevention) Act, 1987", *Cr. LJ*, 1988, pp.106-107.

41. AIR 1961 SC 564.

However the plight of Indian women could not be improved much in British period. In 1947 India attained independence and a new society emerged which was based on democratic norms. In 1950 India's Constitution was promulgated. Preamble to the Constitution provides ideals and aspirations of the people of India. The Preamble of the Constitution was not only concerned for protecting the social and political rights of women but also to ameliorate the yoke of subjugating and oppressive conditions under which she led her existence. Not only the fundamental rights but even the directive principles provide equality to women. There are certain provisions in the Constitution of India and IPC, 1860 which while not making categorical and direct references, certainly endeavour to be guided by these principles. After the incidence of Roop Kanwar in Rajasthan a central act, the Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 was enacted by the Parliament. Judiciary also played a pivotal role in resurrecting the status of women through its remarkable and landmark pronouncements. In the backdrop of this social evil, orthodoxies play a vital role and these nurture inhuman practices like *Sati* all over India. Until and unless, people are made aware about the grass root realities, it is indeed very difficult to eliminate this practice in totality.

CHANGING IMAGES OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN COLONIAL PUNJAB : SOME REFLECTIONS IN URDU ADAB

Suman Bharti*

For Muslim reformers, as for other communities, the position of the women provided an excellent indicator of the 'health' and 'progress' of their societies under the changing circumstances in the nineteenth century Punjab. The newly available print medium represented a trend of upliftment for women and created a zeal among them to write about themselves and express their problems and feasible answers. Contemporary Urdu *Adab* i.e. literature chronicles the long journey of Muslim women of colonial Punjab from their secluded *zenana* sections to political arena stimulated as it was by the changing social conditions under British rule. Against this background, in this paper, it is intended to examine the changing images of Muslim women as reflected in Urdu literature i.e. novels² and women journals. The study also makes authentic researches into the allegory wrought about by the Urdu *Adab* into the social life of women as well as the literary milieu of colonial Punjab.

The British administration established in the Punjab in 1849 was unique in the amount of importance it attached to the process of rapid and thorough going modernization. It effected many socio-economic changes and exerted a deep impact on all areas of the Punjab and Punjabi Muslim life. The changes which began to take place within Punjabi society during the nineteenth century involved the remodeling of ideas about the Muslim women in the context of changing socio-political condition. The loss of power, especially among the urban *Ashraf*, led Muslim men in India to look to home as the new stronghold of Muslim civilization in a polity no longer ruled by Muslims.³ For them, the women were symbolic not only of all that was wrong with their culture and religious life, but also of all that was worth preserving.⁴ Hence, the social reform debate for Muslim women evoked a divergent

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1. Azra Asghar Ali, *The Emergence of Feminism Among Indian Muslim Women*, 1920-1947, OUP, Karachi, Pakistan, 2000, p. xiii.
2. Original texts of Urdu Novels as well as their existing translations are consulted. Some of the novels written by women novelists are available in the serials' parts in the contemporary women journals.
3. David Willmer, "Women in The Pakistan Movement: Modernization and the Promise of a Moral State", in *Modern Asian Studies*, 30,3 (1996), p. 576.
4. Gail Minault, *Secluded Scholars : Women's Education and Muslim Social Reform in colonial India*, OUP, Delhi, 1998, p. 6.

social discourse among the Muslims.

The image of a Muslim woman of the Punjab was, by and large, not different from that of any other Muslim woman of India. It was due to the old religio-feudal order, not due to Islam or *Quran* that she had remained caught in the shackles of illiteracy, seclusion, patriarchy and polygamy. In the Punjab, she had fewer rights than those in other provinces, as the Government had decided to adopt customary rather than religious law (*Shariat* law) as the personal law. Punjabi Muslim woman was deprived of the right to inherit property. Against these repressive social norms, and a new threat of conversion by Christian Missionaries, there emerged a new era of some reform movements in the late nineteenth century Punjab. The essence of this social renovation was upliftment of women, the key to which was to impart education to women.

Although printing press had already been in use in the Punjab since 1830s, but the religio-literary use of the printing press developed in 1860s only. It was a part of the Punjabi tendency to employ all modern technology, economics, politics and law to implement (established by the British) the values and processes that were the heritage of the Punjab. These were the Christian Missionary Churches and the British rulers who demonstrated the Punjabis as to how the press could be used for recording and communicating within large organizations and with the common masses.⁵ In this context, the Muslims were more active than other communities in the 1860s as they owned most of the presses and edited a large number of newspapers and journals and produced many a texts for the rejuvenation of their society as well as to meet the special needs of their women.⁶

The social context and urges which led the Muslim literati to seek to transform and remodel the life of women kept changing with the times. In the first phase, in the second half of the nineteenth century, in the wake of consolidation of British power, their writings endeavoured to characterise the women as a part of the broader transformation of Muslim society. For this they forged ideal domestic women images by keeping them within the framework of Islamic traditions and redelineating their roles in accordance with the changing social imperatives. The change could be seen at the turn of 19th century when the writings aimed at giving women the modern education to meet the demands of emerging new middle class. This middle class was a product of the expansion of modern education and the professional avenues created under British raj. Writings of men as well as women of this phase strove to portray and make the woman progressive and enlightened being, who could be a better companion for her man in social and domestic circles. The third phase of writings belonged to the progressive writers association⁷ which were

5. Emmett Davis, *Press and Politics in British Western Punjab, 1836-1947*, Academic Publishers, New Delhi, 1983, p.11.

6. Edward Churchill, "Printed Literature of the Punjabi Muslims, 1860-1890", in W. Eric Gustafson and Kenneth W. Jones (ed.), *Sources on Punjab History*, Manohar, 1975, pp. 254, 302-303.

7. The group of writers who wrote for the cause of Indian nationalism and socialist revolution. The authors were expected to reflect realistically in their writings the changes taking place in the national life.

reflecting compassion for oppressed women. In 1940s the women's plight was portrayed with prudence and sarcasm. Now she was not an upper class ideal character, but a common mortal and the writings attempted to study female psyche. Setting a new trend the writers of this period specially the women writers tried to challenge the social conventions and talked about the educated and emancipated women, who kept herself free from the constraints of *purdah*.

The social scenario for the first phase produced reformist literature by the new generation of Muslim reformers in the garb of intellectuals from the old Delhi College⁸ like Nazir Ahmad, Altaf Hussain Hali and Rashid-ul Khairi.⁹ They were considerably more advanced¹⁰ in their concern for women education than was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the founder of Aligarh Movement in 1870s. These writers, in a sense, did innovating work in the promotion of women education and literacy.¹¹ The activities of Hali, Nazir and their literary companions were part of the first concerted effort in Punjab to deal with the implications of the British print system and its sub-systems of education and literature.¹² In spite having an influence of the colonial situation on their minds they developed their views independently. After analysing the causes for the deplorable condition of women they gave a program of reform that would remedy their plight.

Nazir Ahmad was the first Muslim literati who raised, albeit with diffidence, the question of women and change in the context of a living social situation.¹³ He advocated the reform of life in the Muslim home. Born in the Bijnore district and a graduate from Delhi College, he became a teacher of *Arabic* in the Punjab¹⁴ and was associated with the Aligarh Movement. He was concerned about women's education and their moral training but he was set apart from his contemporaries by his broader vision of education and by the quality of his literary technique which had a fascinating style, powerful dialogues and understanding of human nature.¹⁵

8. An institution that taught both western sciences and oriental literature through the medium of Urdu.

9. They belonged to an age of new school of thought and poetry which had freed Urdu from the shackles of past Persian models, leading it into poetic truth and earnestness. The pioneers of this new school were Hali, Azad and Nazir Ahmad. Hali and Nazir Ahmad worked as consultants and translators in the Translation Bureau of Education Department, Lahore.

10. Gail Minault, *Voices of Silence*, tr. of Altaf Hussain Hali's *Majalis un-Nissa* and *Chup ki Dad*, Chanakya Publications, Delhi, 1986, p.12.

11. In the census of 1881(part 2, Table XIII), the Literates among Muslim women in three major cities of the Punjab were -

	Literate	Illiterate
Delhi	217	241,479
Amritsar	406	687,379
Lahore	395	626,467

12. Emett Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

13. Aamer Hussain, *Forcing Silence to Speak*: Muhammadi Begam, Mirat ul-Arus, and the Urdu Novel, *The Annual of Urdu Studies*, Vol.11, 1996, p.72.

14. Gail Minault, *Secluded Scholars*, p. 33.

15. Azra Asghar Ali, *The Emergence of Feminism Among Indian Muslim Women*, p. 17.

His first three novels were *Mirat-al-Urus* (The Bride's Mirror (1869), meant for teaching household arts), *Banat-al-Na's* (The Daughters of the Bier (1872) for teaching useful facts), *Taubat-al-Nasuh* (The Repentance of Nasuh (1874) for teaching piety).¹⁶ Together both *Mirat* and *Taubat* had been a permanent part of the syllabi of Urdu schools. They formed a complete syllabus for the education for women. *Mirat al-Urus* and its sequel *Banat-al-Na's* were basically the story of two sisters, Asghari and Akbari in Delhi, one good and the other bad, revolving around the tension between evil (ignorance) and virtue (education) and their impact on the womens' lives.¹⁷ His other two books namely *Muhsinat* or *Fasana-i-Mubtala*, (1885) was concerned with the pains and sufferings of the women that the male-dominated society inflict on them, as also the liberty given to the man to have a second wife, whereas the novel *Ayama* (1891) was concerned with the issue of widow remarriage.¹⁸ All the women characters of Nazir Ahmad impress us by being different from the prevalent image and self-image of Muslim women.

Another women image, Zubaida Khatun conveying the same message for women's education, was forged by Khawaja Altaf Husain Hali in his didactic work *Majalis un-Nissa* (Assemblies of women, 1874). Hali, a poet of Muslim Renaissance, rose as the champion of women. *Majalis* was an important work in the development of Urdu prose style and Hali's literary and intellectual development. *Chup ki Dad* (1905), his another work, together with *Majalis*, showed his innovative spirit.¹⁹ Born in the town of Panipat in the Punjab, Hali remained in Delhi for fifteen years in the circles of Ghalib. He was a friend and contemporary of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan but he did not adopt the same attitude as shared by him towards the plight and education of Muslim women. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's position, however, was that women's education should take place only after the Muslim men had been educated.²⁰ Hali wrote *Majalis* long before he met Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. It is about conversation among middle-class Muslim women of Delhi, using the idioms of the *zenanas* describing women's daily life, their education and training in household management, child-rearing practices, customs and beliefs. Through this work he leaves two messages for the people that educated mother can educate her daughters to be better mothers, to be better managers, and thus a major force in reforming the life of the Muslim community from within; and secondly, that educated mothers can also discipline and train their sons to advance in the schools and in the world outside.²¹ In his poem, *Chup Ki Dad* (Homage to silence, 1905) he voiced a stirring appeal in favour of Muslim women. He poignantly addressed the women of India and paid a moving tribute to their virtue, compassion and forbearance and the injustice they

16. C.M. Naim, *Urdu Texts And Contexts*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2004, p. 132.

17. *Ibid*; G.E. Ward (tr.), *The Bride's Mirror*, Permanent Black, New Delhi, 2001, (1st published in 1903) pp. 18-22.

18. C.M. Naim, "Prize-winning Adab : Five Urdu Books Written in Response to the Gazette Notification No. 791A (1868)", in C.M. Naim (ed.), *Urdu Text and Context*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2004, p. 138.

19. Gail Minault, *Voices of Silence*, p. 3.

20. Maulvi Syed Ikbal Ali, *'Sir Syed Ahmad Khan Punjab Mein'*, p.144.

21. Gail Minault, *Voices of Silence*, p. 15.

suffered in dignified silence at the hands of men. This poem created a sensation and became the charter of Womens' Rights.²² A woman signifies the health and progress of society and religion when Hali describes -

You are the picture of piety,
The counselor of chastity,
Of religion the guarantee.
Protection of the faith
Comes from you.²³

The poem very finely describes not only her pains, denial of education to her, humiliation, oppression but also spread hopes of better future ahead for women, her coming out of *purdah* and an assurance of her capabilities to be proved soon.

After so long, the time is here
for obtaining your birthright.
Justice, veiled, has shown herself
Fleetingly, in the light.²⁴

Hali also wrote a long poem, "*Munajat-i-Beva* i.e. a widow's prayer to God in 1884,²⁵ referring to the fact that girls were often married away at a tender age and soon became widows. For Nazir Ahmed and Hali both, the initiative for the reform and improvement for women had to come from the fathers if it had to have any effect.

Another approach of reform was to argue for a revitalization of tradition for women. In this approach print medium was used by designing the book to reinforce learning systems that had already existed, i.e. to improve them, not to transform them.²⁶ In other words the reformers aimed to Islamize the role of Muslim women and tried to exert the hegemony of *Shariat* values into their private spheres.²⁷ In this effort, the *ulama* thus behaved as a reformer. Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi of Deoband designed a book '*Bihishi Zewar* (The ornaments of Paradise) in 1905, the first of its kind in Urdu *Adab* literature.²⁸ It was directed towards the cause of Islamic reform taking it into the *harem* as the reformer was concerned to intrude on matters of life stage ceremonies and calendrical rituals precisely because they were so much in the hands of women.²⁹ Written for Muslim women, it is an encyclopaedic

22. Qurratulain Hyder, "Muslim Women of India," in Devaki Jain (ed.), *Indian Women*, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1975, pp. 196-197.

23. Gail Minault, *Voices of Silence*, p. 141.

24. Gail Minault, *Voices of Silence*, p. 149.

25. C.M. Naim, *op cit.*, p. 218.

26. Francis Robinson, 'Technology and Religious Change : Islam and the Impact of Print', in *MAS* 27, 1(1993), p.242.

27. Faisal Fatehali Devji, "Gender and the Politics of Space: the Movement for Women's Reform, 1875-1900" in Zoya Hasan (ed.), *Forging Identities : Gender, Communities and the State*, "Kali for Women, 1994, New Delhi, pp.22-37.

28. C.M. Naim, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

29. Barbara Daly Metcalf, "Islam and Custom in Nineteenth-Century India : The Reformist Standard of Maulana Thanawi's *Bihishi Zewar*," in *Contribution to Asian Studies*, Vol. xvii, p. 66.

work of over one thousand pages including detailed discussions of the religious law; not only ritual law, but family, commercial and financial law. It includes sections on household management, the principles of Islamic medicine, biographies of good women, personal development, and the customs.³⁰ Thanawi's concerns to reform the plight of women are religious as well as economic when he charges the false customs, which were practised as a part of religion and were responsible for their deplorable condition; he also criticizes the expenses spent on these false customs. The book delineated domestic roles for women and gradually it became a part of the dowry of Muslim brides. But Thanawi was against the newly opened *zanana* schools and the books and the curriculum taught there.³¹ He developed his view independently of a western critique.

Though all these reformers through their writings, were trying to bring a change in the social status of Muslim women yet a radical change could not be inferred out, due to the restricted curricula and a stress given to home learning of girls. The conservative approach of Deobandi Ulemas for women's role in society was refuted by another Deobandi traditional intellectual Mumtaz Ali Khan with his book *Huququn-Niswan*. Mumtaz Ali was a student of Deoband *Madrasah*. Later he joined his father in Lahore, and studied English at home. He was very much a product of the climate in which the debates and *manazaras* between the Christian missionaries and Hindus and Muslims were at their peak.³² He with his modernist approach for women became the foremost proponent and pioneer of Muslim women's education and rights as well as Urdu Journalism for women in the Punjab. Radical in its content the book *Huququn-Niswan* (Rights of women) supported gender equality on the basis of *Quran* and *Hadith*. The book irritated Sir Syed, when Mumtaz Ali happened to show him the manuscript of his treatise in defence of women's rights in Islamic law.³³ The work describes (1) the various reasons why people say that men are superior to women, (2) women's education (3) *purdah* (4) marriage customs and (5) relations between husband and wife.³⁴ He refuted so many fallacies and arguments regarding the rights of Muslim women with alternate interpretation of *Quranic* verses that his book can be regarded as the first feminist interpretation of *Quran* in India in the nineteenth century. But it could not bring much change in the lives of women as it urged the men to change their beliefs.

Except the above discussed intellectuals and writers the Muslim women's life got effected by some other intellectuals and their writings such as Rashid-ul-Khairi and Sharar. During the 1930s and 1940s the women images reflected in the modern novels were no longer conventionally perfect beings who overcame all trials and tribulations through strength and integrity of character. The modern novelists attempted to understand and portray those who were condemned at the bar of social morality, to lay bare their struggles and to reveal the causes that made them

30. *Ibid.*

31. C.M. Naim, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

32. Sayyid Mumtaz Ali, *Huquq un-Niswan*, Darul-Isha'at-e-Punjab, Lahore, 1898.

33. Gail Minault, "Sayyid Mumtaz Ali and 'Huquq un-Niswan': An Advocate of Women's Rights in Islam in the late Nineteenth Century, in *MAS* 24, 1 (1990), p. 147.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 151.

what they were. Hadi Hasan Rusva's *Umrao Jan Ada*, Mirza Muhammad Said's *'Yasmin'* and M. Aslam's *'Nazima ki Ap Bitt'*, all these have for the hero or heroine a conventionally erring personage. Although *'Umrao Jan Ada'* and *'Yasmin'* were written for the areas located outside the Punjab yet the reformist tendencies of the novels did influence Muslim women in the Punjab. *'Nazima ki Ap Bitt'* was written with the definite object of showing the dangers a woman is exposed to on leaving "*pardah*" in a society which has not learnt to respect her. It is a true enough picture of the state of affairs prevailing among the pseudo-westernised Indians especially in the Punjab.³⁵ The novel tries to reflect the rottenness of modern Indian society and warns against the unthinking imitation of the west.

Then comes the time when the Muslim women themselves took the charge of reform in their hands also. At the turn of the nineteenth century, influenced by men's writings they got themselves aware of the times and started analysing their lives on their own and wrote social novels aiming at reform. Muhammadi Begam³⁶ may be called as the first woman novelist in the Punjab. As she was the editor of a women's paper³⁷ *Tehzib un-Niswan*, her work received great publicity than that of her contemporaries. Her first novel *'Sharif Beti'* (The noble daughter), is a story with the theme of opening a maktab by a woman. Her second novel *Ajkal* (The Present Time) is about the evil consequences of, for ever delaying, to do things. Her third novel *'Safiya Begam'* is about the bad consequences of a childhood engagement which lead Safiya (the main female character of the novel) to die of a broken heart.³⁸ Though the story leaves a good message but the plot construction could have been better.

Nazr Sajjad Hydar, is next in the line of women novelists. Her first novel *'Akhtar un Nisa Begam'* is the story of a girl who, through the machinations of her step-mother, is married into a disrespectful household and suffers much, but in the end succeeds through the fact of being educated in surmounting her difficulties. Her other novel *'Hirman Nasib'* takes a bold step towards introducing a love motif in the story, the first instance where the heroine of the novel, Feroza is made to appear in love openly and with the knowledge and approval of her parents. Feroza belongs to a very westernised Indian family and does not observe *pardah*. Her other novels such as *'Ah i Mazluman'*, *'Janbaz'*, *'Suryya'* and *'Mazhab'* and *'Ishq'* also dealt with the contemporary social problems as well as political circumstances of the times.³⁹ Her heroines are college educated, played the *sitar* and *piano*. Hyder portrayed the life of the Anglicised upper middle class.⁴⁰

Another woman novelist was Abbasi Begam who wrote *'Zohara Begam'*, the story of a girl whom her parents sacrificed to their love of money.⁴¹ The girl, Zohra

35. S.A. Suhrawardy, *Hand Book of Urdu Literature*, p.185.

36. Wife of Mumtaz Ali, the writer of *Huquq un-Niswan*.

37. The weekly Journal was published from Lahore.

38. Suhrawardy, S.A., *Hand Book of Urdu Literature*, Indigo Books, Cosmos Publications, New Delhi, 2003 (1st published in 1945), pp. 123-131.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 130-135.

40. Qurratulain Hyder, Preface of *"The Sound of Falling Leaves,"* Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, p. X.

41. Suhrawardy, S.A., *op. cit.*, p. 136.

is well portrayed in the last chapters where she is no longer a personification of the artificial virtues that society demands, but a woman with all the purity of thought and selflessness. Abbasi Begam and Nazr Sajjad Hydar were the best known journalists and novelists amongst the women between the years 1900 and 1925.

The above discussed novels more or less revolve around the problems created by the 'mistakes' (pertaining to child marriage, marriage for money, childhood engagement and marriage not based on sound education of girls) done by the parents in marrying off their daughters. At the same time another novel '*Husan Ara Begam*'⁴² (1914) written by Begam Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz⁴³ shows a more original theme. Husan Ara, the heroine of the novel has to face and overcome the difficulties which are not the usual ones of incompatible or unwilling marriages. Having faced the life boldly, she worked for social reform and educational progress.⁴⁴ The authoress tries to prove how education helps a woman to surmount all the obstacles, rather than the study of personalities.

A few writers belonging to Progressive Writers' Association, made a complete break from all the slow and religiously sanctioned changes recommended for women by the afore-mentioned writers. With the realism of their writings the changes in women's lives received a boost. One such writing which reveals the core of female psyche⁴⁵ and questions the standards of middle-class respectability that permitted the oppression of women to occur, was *Terhi Lakir* (The Crooked Line, 1945) written by Ismat Chughtai.⁴⁶ Due to a shared language Urdu and shared values of North Indian Muslims, the novel written outside the area of Punjab has depicted a shared image of Muslim woman. Ismat was born into a large middle-class family in 1915, the ninth of ten children. Her father was a civil servant in U.P. Ismat was a radical novelist and one of the most important feminist voices in the Urdu language. At least two women short story writers named Hijab Imtiaz Ali⁴⁷ and the progressive Dr. Rashid Jahan⁴⁸ had a profound impact on her mind. Ismat was a major force in

42. *Ibid.*, p. 160. The novel was published in serial parts in *Sharif Bibian*, a woman journal.

43. Begam Shah Nawaz was a great name in the political field and worked as a social worker in the Punjab. She was the daughter of Mian Muhammad Shafi, the famous political leader in the colonial Punjab.

44. Jahanara Shahnawaz, *Father and Daughter : A political Biography*, Nigarishat, Lahore, Pakistan, 1971. p. 41.

45. Ismat Chughtai, *Terhi Lakir*, tr. Tahira Naqvi, 'The Crooked Line', Kali for women, New Delhi (1995), p. vii.

46. She was a progressive writer and a grand dame of Urdu fiction, her story *Lihaf* dealing with the issue of women's sexual desires and the needs of a woman in cloistered household, made her a fierce writer and a feminist. For this, she was charged with obscenity by the then government, the trial took place in the Lahore Court.

47. Hijab Imtiaz Ali belonged to the Punjab whose stories were the romances pure and simple. She was a fabulist of the 1930s, and a feminine first person vein of social and sexual criticism.

48. Dr. Rashid Jahan was the marxist daughter of Sheikh Abdulla and Begam Abdullah, founders of Aligarh Girls College. Her writings reflected her active social conscience and compassion for oppressed women. Her contribution to '*Angare*' a scandalous book from progressive writers, identified her as a rebel.

creating new trends in writing by and about women. The novel *Terhi Lakir* depicts more or less her own experiences, which have been characterised through the leading female character, 'Shaman' in her novel. The ups and downs of the life of Shaman who comes from a middle class Muslim family and who rebels against her Indo-Muslim upbringing, have been narrated as to expose the socio-cultural conflicts and the psycho-sexual determinants that govern the developments of female consciousness. After gathering information of Ismat's life experiences depicted in the said novel, one can best underline the changes which occurred in 1920s in Muslim woman's life who had been a victim so far of a tradition bound society. Ismat has touched some contemporary social problems such as *purdah*, discrimination based on caste with uncanny insight. She has very critically examined the fact as to how the various phases of woman's psyche and experiences from childhood to womanhood lead her to the development of a sense of self.⁴⁹ She has also referred to incessant tradition of oppression meant for women where one woman harasses and perpetrates cruelty on the other woman out of frustration. Placed in a milieu of turmoil and transition as India moves from imperial past to an independent future, the novel tells the tale of a young woman searching for her place in the new world. Ismat's life and presence in the years that followed became emblematic of an era, a special gilded age of Urdu fiction.⁵⁰

Unitedly all these novels demand more freedom, better chances of education, and an acknowledgement of woman position as man's equal. They also depict the changed and enlightened inner state of Muslim women that was the creation of the process of rapid social change. The women were expanding and extolling in their writings, the theories and percepts favoured by the Urdu *adab*, namely the education of women and westernisation. Literacy⁵¹ and education both provided them the unique tools required for self-expression and self-discovery with which they could construct a femininity based on their own perceptions rather than societal ideas of what women were like or should have been like.

In the quest of knowing more about the changing images of Muslim women, we come across the contemporary Urdu women journals or magazines, which were another source of print medium and an inexpensive way to convey ideas to women in *purdah*. To this cause, the men editors had a support of their women and sometimes these magazines were edited by women themselves. Besides educating women in their rights, the journals made the women aware of contemporary socio-cultural events as well. In the Punjab, it was only in the 1890s that the Punjab responded to this new wave of women's journals, and in 1893, *Sharif Bibiyan* (respectable women), a monthly and in 1898, the famous weekly *Tehzib un-Niswan*

49. Ismat Chughtai, *op cit.*, p. viii.

50. Tahira Naqvi, 'Ismat Chughtai - A Tribute', *The Annual of Urdu Studies*, Vol.8, 1993, p. 42.

51. In Census of Punjab, 1931(part 1,p.256), literate Muslim women were

	Total Literate	Literate Muslim women
Amritsar	6,486	2,324
Lahore	13,196	5,943

(reform among women) became the second such journal to come out from Lahore.⁵² Other such journals were *Ismat* (Delhi), *Niswani Duniya* (Delhi), *Saheli* (Amritsar and Lahore), *Nurjahan* (Amritsar). The cardinal motive of these journals was to encourage education among Muslim women as it appeared to be an apparent answer to their servile condition. Working as trailblazers to this cause the magazines further expanded the horizon of women and their roles in society. The articles contributed by Muslim men as well as women to these journals discussed about women education,⁵³ household management, good advice to daughter-in-law, reform and simplification of custom, dowry etc.⁵⁴ They also included social problems of women like *pardah*⁵⁵ polygamy, child marriage and rights of women.⁵⁶ *Tehzib un-Niswan* was the magazine which also published articles on the contemporary political scene, the events of World War-I, Non-co-operation and Swadeshi movement. It also covered the proceedings and meetings of the various Muslim women's organisations such as *Anjuman-i-Khawatin-i-Islam*⁵⁷ and Punjab Provincial Muslim Women League⁵⁸. Muslim intellectuals, men as well as women and the journals, thus, forced the pillars of the Indian Islamic structure and established traditions to re-delineate the Muslim women's position, duties and rights in the changing times.

It is inferred from the above discussion that long before the launch of Aligarh movement, the Muslims of the Punjab had started working on their own tradition of cultural re-examination and reform. Whether they belonged to old Delhi college or Deoband school of thought, they developed their view for the women sometimes independently of a western critique to interact with the socio-cultural influences of British rule. Considering the upliftment of Muslim women as crucial in the overall regeneration of Muslim society the Muslim intellectuals in the guise of reformers realized the importance of education for the women. Print medium helped them to communicate their ideas with others, across the hindrances of *pardah* and confinements of family, neighbourhood and region. Their views for enlightened women got reflected in the role models of their writings. The writings of reformist men like Nazir Ahmad, Hali and Thanawi created that early stage, where the objectives of Muslim women's education were formulated within the context of their social role. But very soon the modernists like Mumtaz Ali, with his book *Huquq un-Niswan* and weekly newspaper *Tehzib un-Niswan*, brought with him a new conception of goals of women's education as a means of providing equality of opportunity for men and women. A commendable work in creating favourable public opinion in this direction was done by a spate of other journals published in the Punjab. Thus, Punjab and Punjabi Muslim women owe a great deal of gratitude to these men writers who awakened the women to their education, rights, emancipation

52. Dushka Saiyid, 'Muslim Women of the British Punjab : From Seclusion to Politics', Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 1998, p. 53.

53. *Tehzib un-Niswan*, Lahore, 14 May 1931, p. 463; 18 April 1936, pp. 378-379.

54. *Nurjahan*, Amritsar, November 1925, pp. 3-33.

55. *Saheli*, Amritsar, annual number, 1925, p. 45; *Tehzib un-Niswan*, 4 July 1931, p. 654.

56. *Saheli*, Amritsar, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-44.

57. *Tehzib un-Niswan*, Lahore, 24 Jan. 1931, p. 88.

58. *Tehzib un-Niswan*, Lahore, 14 June 1936, pp. 568-569.

and advancement. The women with the writings of their own thus carried forward the torch already lit and could challenge the stereotypical image of the veiled women and came out of it, participated in their National movement, hence, presented a complete metamorphosis in their personalities. The reflections which we get after scanning these texts written between 1870 and 1947 present the changing images of *Shurafa* Muslim women i.e. upper middle class women. As the spread of education and literacy was limited and was confined to the urban cultural centres of Lahore, Delhi and Amritsar, the upper middle class Urdu speaking (sometimes non-Muslim also) women were the only receivers of the benefits of this literary milieu. It was this class only which provided themselves as the contributors as well as readers to the women's journals. Pattern of social life of lower middle class Muslim women is an area yet to be explored.

HISTORY OF 'PSYCHOLOGY' IN PUNJAB

*Agyajit Singh**

Psychology is the study of human behaviour. It is the study of man, man as a living human being, acting in an ever-changing world, responding to things, events and other people. It studies the problem "Why do we do what we do?" It gives the answer how we interact with others when we come in contact with them. Now it has become the scientific study of individuals' actions, reactions and their experiences when they interact with other individuals. Hence it studies man's behaviour in relation to society. Man acts more or less consistently with himself, although often differently from other persons. There is, moreover, a great deal of interaction among persons. They act together in groups, i.e.; families, societies, parties and nations etc.¹

Man is a unit in a complex field of social relations. How does man fit into the social structure and how he makes adjustment to it or tries to resist it? Man is a single individual in this whole process. While chemically, he seems to be only an active mass of protoplasm, he turns out to have many consistencies of behaviour which make up what is called his personality.²

To trace the historical development of psychology, we must go as far back in history as the Greek philosophers. In the writings of Aristotle, Plato, Socrates and others, we find references to problems concerning human behaviour. Aristotle's treatise '*De anima*' (on the soul) is considered to be the beginning of psychology. It was Rudolf Goeckel who, for the first time used the word 'Psychology'—denoting the study of the mind in 1590. Descartes (1590-1650) was neither convinced nor satisfied with this definition given to psychology. He considered that the matter and mind were both substances but between them there was no natural connection. He contended that 'conscious' was the "essence of mind" and so psychology from his time, came to be regarded as the study of 'consciousness'. These problems appear again in the writings of philosophers of the 17th and 18th century. Prior to the 19th century, however, there was no psychology as such and the problems concerning man that ultimately fell within the domain of philosophy. In those days, it was the exclusive concern of philosophers and theologians.

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1. Boring, E.G.; Langfield H.S. & H.P., *Foundations of Psychology*, John Wiley & Sons, inc. New York, 1963.
2. Lefton, L.A., *Psychology* (Third edition), Allyn and Bacon, inc., Boston, 1985.
3. Baron, R.A., *Psychology* (Third edition), Prentice Hall, Inc., Englewood cliffs, New Jersey, 1996.

The emergence of psychology as a science occurred more than a century ago. This event was stimulated by certain achievements of physicists and physiologists. Physicists discovered the relation between aspects of the environment (stimuli) and elementary experiences as sensations. At the same time, physiologists were discovering the structure of sense organs and brain which when stimulated give rise not only to sensation but also to various reflexes and other aspects of behaviour.⁴

Psychology is the youngest branch of the youngest discipline in human development. It came into being in the world scenario in 1879 when Wilhaum Wundt established its first psychological laboratory at Leipzig in Germany. Before that it was just an arm chair discipline called as mental philosophy.⁵

Ever since the end of World War-II, psychology has been growing fast in ideas, methods, knowledge, and data all over the world. Psychology has undergone many changes in the last century. Those developments have resulted in the use of scientific methods to evaluate behaviour and behavioural disorders. Early psychologists had not developed some of the tools, concepts, techniques or insights that modern psychologists use to understand behaviour. A thorough examination of a person's background was not always considered necessary or appropriate. Today, a good psychologist evaluates the full range of biological and environmental factors that might be affecting an individual's current situation i.e.; complex interplay between biological heritage and life experiences which together shape the individual's daily behaviour.⁶

In the state of Punjab, the discipline of Psychology came into being very late in 1959, when post-graduate department of Psychology was set up in Panjab University Chandigarh. Dr. M.K. Dey joined as first Head of the Department. Before that the subject of psychology was taught in the colleges as a part of Philosophy. At the undergraduate level, philosophy consisted of two parts as Ethics and Psychology. Even psychology as an academic discipline became independent when Deptt. of Psychology was started. Later on Dr. S Jalota joined as Professor, who was a well known psychologist of India at that time. He constructed and standardized the first verbal group test of intelligence in English which became very popular and still being used in the research studies and counseling services.

Dr. Jalota prepared a group test of General Mental Ability in Hindi. It was standardized on 11-16 years students. Later on, he along with Dr. R.K. Tandon developed Group Test of General Mental Ability in English for the age group of 15-19 years as well as for adults. Dr. Tandon also prepared Group Test of intelligence

4. Benjamin, L.T., Hopkins J.R. & Nation J.R., *Psychology*, Macmillan Publishing Corporation, New York, 1987.
5. Hilgard, E.R., Atkinson R.C. & Atkinson R.L., *Introduction to Psychology*, (6th edition), Oxford & IBH Publishing Co.Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1975.
6. Hasset, J. & White, K.M., *Psychology in Perspective* (2nd edition), Harper & Row Publishers Inc., New York, 1989.

in Hindi for college students as well as adults. He also prepared a group test of intelligence meant for children of 10-16 years in Hindi. Dr. Jalota along with Dr. S.D. Kapoor adapted Maudsley Personality Inventory in Hindi. It is a measure of neuroticism and extraversion duly adapted and standardized in Indian conditions on population ranging from 16 years and above.

During this period, Dr. G.C. Ahuja devised a group test of intelligence in English for the age group of 13 to 17 years. It was standardized on school students of both sexes. Prof. R.R. Kumaria, Ex-Principal, Govt. College of Education, Jalandhar also prepared intelligence test which is known as the Pasrur Group Intelligence test.

After Dr. Jalota left the University in 1964, Dr. (Mrs.) H. K. Nijhawan was one of the founder faculty members of the Deptt. of Psychology, Panjab University, Chandigarh who contributed very much in the area of Developmental Psychology; especially Child Psychology. She remained the Head of the Department for the maximum period of time. She did the pioneer work in the field of anxiety in school children and conducted a major research project on "Anxiety among children" and adapted the Sorenson's Children Anxiety Test in Punjabi language for Punjabi population. She also published a book. She worked extensively in various areas of child development like parent-child relations, anxiety, delinquency, motivation etc. and published her work in reputed journals. She supervised many Ph.D. Theses in the area of personality, social change, anxiety, deviant behaviour motivation, cognition, health psychology, child development and school achievement. She has to her credit the Indian adaptation of some scales for the measurement of anxiety and parent-child relations.

The contemporary psychologist of this area was Dr. L.N. Dosanjh. Though he had worked in the colleges of Education at Dharamsala, Jalandhar and retired as Principal of Govt. College of Education, Sector 20, Chandigarh; yet he had shown his interest in the psychological studies. In 1976, he was selected as a U.G.C. Research Professor at Panjab University. He devised his D-test as a projective technique for the assessment of personality. He also worked as a honorary clinical psychologist at Chandigarh after his retirement and used psycho-analytical technique for the treatment of mentally-ill persons. Earlier in 1956-57, he was sent as a UNESCO Fellow from India to work at the International Institute for child study at Bangkok. He had contributed about fifty research papers and published about 80 articles on psychological and educational topics. He has published 15 books in the field of Psychology and Education. He attended international Congress of Cross-Cultural Psychology at Tilburg University, Holland in 1976 and again in 1981 at Queen's University at Kingston Canada. In the same year, he was elected a Fellow by the Indian Association of Clinical Psychologists. In 1986, he was awarded certification as a Diplomat in Professional Counseling by the International Academy of Behavioural Medicine Counseling and Psychotherapy, Inc, Dallas, Texas (USA).

In the Panjab University, Chandigarh, Dr. Vidhu Mohan and Dr. Jatinder Mohan, students of Dr. H.K. Nijhawan continued contributing much for the development

of psychological studies and research and produced very rich literature while serving as professors and carved a niche by their name and fame in their area of specialization.

Dr. Vidhu Mohan was the chairperson of the department from 1981 to 1984. She has about 39 years experience of teaching and research work. Her field of specialization is Social Psychology, Guidance & Counseling, Educational and Abnormal Psychology as well as Criminal Psychology. She has guided 38 Ph.D. scholars in the area of Personality, Organizational Behaviour, Criminal Psychology, Women issues and test construction. She has published two books on Personality and Academic Attainment and written 20 Chapters for other books. She has devised and prepared 16 psychological tests.

Dr. Jitendra Mohan was U.G.C. Emeritus Fellow and President of Asian Association of Applied Psychology as well as Indian Academy of Applied Psychology. He was the founder President of Sports Psychology Association of India during 1985 to 1993. He was consultant for training and organizing programmes with many organizations. He wrote 23 books including "*Personality: Across Cultures*." He has published 250 research papers, written 30 chapters for various books. He guided 70 Ph.D. Theses and completed 18 sponsored research projects.

During this period, Dr. Promila Vasudeva also worked in the same department and advanced the knowledge of Social Psychology and Organizational Psychology. She has guided 22 Ph.D. scholars in the area of personality, attitude change, women studies and gender role, leadership and job satisfaction. She has written one book on "Social Change." She has a total experience of 39 years in teaching and research in psychology and published many research papers in international and national journals.

Dr. Prem Verma has done research in the areas of anxiety, parent-child relations, deprivation, aggression, and aging. She has taught psychology for 37 years and has supervised many Ph.Ds in the areas of Competition and cooperation, drug abuse, aggression, academic achievement, stress in working women, aging, and procrastination. She has constructed/ translated/ adapted scales/ tests to measure Anxiety, Parent-Child Relations, Aggression, Friendship Construct, Interests, and Role Conflict in working women.

Meanwhile, Dr. V.V. Upmanyu joined the Department after serving for a few years at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. He worked in the area of Clinical and Health Psychology and contributed his research work in stress management, anxiety and depression.

Another colleague of these scholars, Dr. Jagat Jerrath researched the field of Experimental Psychology. Initially he worked on McClelland's theory of motivation. He guided 11 Ph.D. research scholars in which the attitudes and motives of the students during the Punjab problem were assessed. He also guided research in the area of organizational psychology. He has published 20 research papers in foreign and Indian journals and presented many research papers at different conferences and seminars.

Similarly, Dr. L.S. Minhas also came from G.N.D. University, Amritsar who contributed in the areas of research like basic phenomenon of creativity, Rorschach

Inkblot indices of Creativity, as well as Guilford Structure of Intellect model and Sternberg Triarchic theory. He has attended international conferences in Germany, Austria and Tehran and presented research paper and conducted workshop.

Guru Nanak Dev University was started at Amritsar in 1969 in the tercentenary year of birth of first Sikh Guru, Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and it established the Department of Psychology in 1970. In these 40 years of its existence, the faculty members of the Department of Psychology have contributed much in the advancement of knowledge in psychology and produced much psychological literature. Dr. Jatinder Mohan joined as first Head of the Department and later on Dr. P. S. Hundal joined as Professor & Head in 1973. Both of them came from Panjab University. Dr. Jatinder Mohan went back to Panjab University after serving here for a few years. Dr. P. S. Hundal continued serving this university till his death in 1983.

Dr. P.S. Hundal standardized a General Mental Ability Test to measure intelligence of Punjabi speaking school children in Punjabi language. He contributed his research work in the area of Psychometrics e.g. factor analytical studies of abilities, intelligence, anxiety and other variables of psychology. He also worked in collaboration with a well known psychologist of America, **Dr. R.B. Cattell** and advanced his theory of crystallized and fluid intelligence in India. ~~By his~~ outstanding work, he earned his name and fame as one of the eminent Punjabi psychologists in India and abroad. He produced 20 Ph.D. scholars and published a number of research papers in Indian and foreign journals. He attended various conferences in India and abroad.

Dr. Amar Singh Dhaliwal who retired as Registrar and Controller of Examinations of Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar and now settled in Canada also contributed much in psychological literature when he was working as Professor of Psychology. He wrote a book on Educational Psychology in Punjabi which was published by the Publication Bureau of Punjabi University. His main area of thrust was Psychometric and examination reforms. He initiated many innovative strategies to bring changes in the present examination system. He is still busy in writing and contributing psychological literature in Punjabi, despite his old age.

Dr. Satvir Singh, who was a student of Dr. P.S. Hundal remained as Head of the Deptt. of Psychology and also Dean Faculty of Social Sciences for a number of years. He worked in a new area of Rural Psychology and researched the achievement motivation of the rural population. He worked on agricultural and industrial workers. He also worked in the Organizational Psychology, especially in entrepreneurship and aggressiveness. He has published more than 200 research papers in foreign and Indian journals. He retired as Professor Emeritus in Psychology. He guided 15 Ph.D. students.

Dr. Rita Aggarwal, though belonged to Varanasi in U.P., worked in the Deptt. of Psychology at G. N. D. University, Amritsar from 1979 to 1995 during which time she also served as the Head of the Department. She worked in the area of Clinical and Health Psychology and also wrote a book on *"Stress in Life and at Work"*. Earlier in her career she was awarded an American Field Service International

Scholarship to study in the USA. She has previously co-edited "*Stress and its Management*" (1999); and has served as Associate Editor and then Editor of the *Journal of Personality Studies and Group Behaviour*. She has been awarded several research grants, including a long-term project by the Govt. of India, and has also served as a management consultant for a number of organizations.

Punjabi University was set up in 1962 at Patiala for the main purpose of the promotion of Punjabi language, literature and culture. But it established the Department of Psychology very late in its silver jubilee year of 1987. Dr. Labh Singh, who was the Principal of a post-graduate college at Rampur in U.P. was appointed the first Head of the Department. He remained here for less than a year, when in 1988 he joined as Joint Director Higher Education, Govt. of U.P. at Allahabad. Then Dr. Agyajit Singh who was already working in the same university in the Deptt. of Education, was made the H.O.D. He remained on this job from November 1988 to July 1993 and then again from August 1996 to July 1999, when he was superannuated.

During this period, Dr. Agyajit Singh worked in contributing a lot for the development of psychological literature especially in Punjabi language. He wrote a book on Abnormal Psychology in Punjabi (*Asdharan Manovigyan*) for graduate students. He also edited a book in Punjabi on Experimental Psychology. These two books were published by the Publication Bureau of Punjabi University, Patiala. Then he wrote a book in Punjabi on Educational Psychology for B.Ed. students which became very popular. He also contributed many articles on different psychological issues in Punjabi language, published in different journals and Punjabi newspapers. His book on Problem Children (*Samaseya Bache*) is being published by Punjab Language Deptt.

Dr. Agyajit Singh served Punjabi University for 30 years; first in the Deptt. of Education and then in Psychology department. His major contribution is in the area of Educational Psychology and Sports Psychology. He has guided 25 Ph.D. scholars and 30 M.Phil. students in their research work and written 15 books and published more than 150 research papers and articles in English and Punjabi language in the journals of repute. He has specialized in the area of Sports Psychology, as he is the first psychologist to start Sports Psychology in India and also worked in Boston (USA) for a few months and researched on the topic of Emotional Intelligence. Now he is engaged in writing a book on "Emotional Intelligence" in Punjabi language. He has attended many international and national conferences and seminars and presented research papers and key - note addresses in sports psychology. He attended World Sports Psychology Conference at Brussels in Belgium in 1987 and also visited Paris (France). He also had the opportunity of working as a team psychologist with Indian athletic team and Indian women hockey team before Busan Asian Games in 2002 when he was working at Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports Patiala as Sports Psychologist. He was given a research award by the S.I.S society of USA for working on the SIS test for diagnostic purposes. Recently, he was conferred with "Life Time Achievement Award" in Sports Psychology by Sports Psychology Association

of India at the International Congress of Sports Psychology held at Lakshmibai National University of Physical Education, Gwalior.

Dr. Satnam Singh Khumar, who was a famous Urdu poet as well as psychologist of Haryana fame, joined the department after working for many years at Bhiwani. He had contributed his research work in the area of clinical and health psychology. He devised non-drug therapies for the hypertension patients and also worked on biofeedback technique. He also wrote a book in Punjabi on "Behavioural Medicine".

In the same period, Dr. B.S. Sandhu joined the department after working at Guru Nanak Dev University for many years. His work is quite popular in the area of Creativity and Projective techniques of personality assessment. He has guided 14 Ph. D. students in the area of Personality and attended 20 national and international conferences.

Contribution in the psychological studies and literature was made by the faculty members of the Education Department of Punjabi University, Patiala. Dr. T.R.Sharma who started the department as Head, as back as in 1970 and retired as Dean, Faculty Of Education in 1985 did marvelous work in research and curriculum development as well as production and translation of psychological literature in Punjabi language. He translated many books of foreign authors in Punjabi language; out of which his major contribution is the translation of Sorenson's book on "*Educational Psychology*". He also wrote books on Statistics and Measurement & Evaluation in Punjabi. He constructed and standardized a non-verbal test of Intelligence called as "Draw a Cycle Test" for measuring intelligence of the school children in the age group of 11-15 years.

Dr. Amrit Kaur, retired Professor of Education who had her research degree from California University, Berkeley (USA) before joining the Punjabi University in 1968 had researched in the field of Experimental Psychology and Educational Psychology in the area of learning and memory. She worked as Asstt. Professor / Statistician at Fresno State College, Fresno as well as in University of California in USA. She wrote a book on "*Educational Psychology*" in Punjabi language in collaboration with Dr.(Mrs.) Inderjit Kaur Sandhu, Ex Vice-Chancellor of Punjabi University. She produced 25 Ph.D. students. She has published 70 research papers/ articles in various national and international journals. She also developed a Test called as Self Concept Scale for adults. She has visited many foreign countries like USA, UK, USSR, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland for academic assignments. She was awarded International Peace Scholarship for obtaining higher education in USA.

Dr. R.P. Goyal retired as a Professor of Education and worked in the area of Educational Psychology (Creativity and Intelligence) as well as Guidance & Counseling. He was appointed as a member of the Working Group on Creativity Research in India set up by the NCERT in 1975. He wrote a book on Guidance & Counseling in Punjabi language which was published by Punjabi University. He has guided 12 Ph.D. students in the area of Guidance and Counseling and has published 50 research papers and articles. He has also contributed articles in two

books, one published by the NCERT and the other by Punjabi University. He has translated one book from English to Punjabi. He participated and presided over a large number of seminars, workshops and conferences of national and international level and also delivered key-note addresses.

Dr. T. S. Sodhi, another faculty member of the same department worked and contributed in the psychological studies. He worked in the area of Population Psychology and constructed and standardized attitude scales. He prepared Sodhi's Attitude Scale in Hindi and English. He along with Dr. Bhatnagar prepared Sodhi and Bhatnagar Interest Inventory for girls, in Hindi and English.

The work in the field of psychological studies was also conducted in the psychiatry department of Post-graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (P.G.I.) at Chandigarh under the guidance of Dr. N.N.Wig, a well known and internationally renowned expert in Psychiatry. Later on he became consultant with World Health Organization. He developed a test called as PGI Mental Health Inventory. He also wrote a book on "*Mental Health- Bliss for Everybody*," which was translated into Punjabi language for Punjabi speaking population. After him, Dr.S.K.Verma and Dr. Dwerka Pershad continued contributing their work in psychological studies. Dr. Dwerka Pershad evinced his keen interest in the projective techniques of Rorschach Test and S.I.S. Test for diagnosing the mental deterioration of the mentally disturbed patients.

Dr. N. N. Wig, D. Pershad and S.K. Verma adapted and prepared Cornell Medical Index Health Questionnaire in both Hindi and English. They also prepared PGI Health Questionnaire N-1 in both Hindi and English. Dr. S.K. Verma with Dr. Anita Verma prepared PGI General Well Being Measure in Hindi and English. Similarly, Dr. Dwerka Pershad with Dr. S.K.Verma prepared a test called "Dysfunction Analysis Questionnaire in Hindi. They also devised another test called as PGI Battery of Brain Dysfunction in Hindi and English. Dr. Dwerka Pershad in collaboration with Dr. N.N. Wig developed PGI Memory Scale both in Hindi and English. It is very useful in clinical practice and for mental patients.

During this period, Dr. Gurmeet Singh, a well known psychiatrist who worked at Govt. Rajindera Medical College and retired as DRME at Chandigarh prepared "Presumptive Stressful Life Event Scale in English along with Dr. Dalbir Kaur and H.Kaur. It consists of 51 life events which are further classified into personal or impersonal, desirable and undesirable and ambiguous items. It can be used for male and females in the age group of 35+.

So, we can conclude that the history of Psychology in Punjab is only 50 years old. During the last five decades of its existence, the discipline of psychology has made a rapid progress. The psychological literature during this period has developed too much. The Psychologists of the area have contributed much for the advancement of knowledge in its studies. The forefathers of psychology in Punjab were Dr. Jalota, Dr. (Mrs.) Nijhawan, and Dr. Dosanjh. After its bright beginning, the middle range psychologists like Dr. Vidhu Mohan, Dr. Jatinder Mohan, Dr. Promila Vasudeva and Dr. Prem Verma at Panjab University had made an attempt to contribute to build this discipline. Dr. P.S. Hundal, Dr. Amar Singh Dhaliwal, Dr.

Satbir Singh in G.N.D University have tried to nurture this discipline. Similarly Dr. Agyajit Singh and Dr. B.S. Sandhu, have raised the image of this young discipline through their research studies. Psychologists working at PGI Chandigarh like Dr. Wig, Dr. S.K. Verma and Dwerka Pershad have enriched this subject through their research findings. Many educationists like Dr. T. R. Sharma, Dr. Amrit Kaur, and Dr. R.P.Goyal also contributed a lot in the psychological studies through their work.

The work in psychology started in the area of Educational Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Experimental Psychology and test construction in intelligence and personality. But research work continued in the areas of personality development, motivation, organizational behaviour and clinical psychology. Work was also done in psychometrics and multivariate analysis. Recently, new areas of psychology like Sports Psychology and Criminal Psychology are also being explored and research work has started in this direction. But not sufficient literature of psychology has been produced in the Punjabi language, especially for the post-graduate students. There is a need to encourage the scholars to devote their time and expertise in writing psychology literature in our mother tongue. The authorities concerned should take proper steps in this regard.

SANGHOL KARTTIKEYA IMAGE—A BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Jaspal Singh*

Kushana period of Sanghol¹ (Samghalaya) metropolis is deeply associated with different types of sculptures, terracotta forms, seals, sealings and numismatic records. As in the beginning, Kushana rulers remarkably accepted the local imagery and philosophy without hampering the age-old tradition of metaphorical sign and form. Kushana rulers like Kanishka showed their secular look while keeping the imagery on the reverse of the coins, the deities are Greek, Indian and Zoroastrian.² But as soon as Kushana Empire and its rulers accepted more local concepts, they adopted the certain forms of social magnitude.

Sanghol metropolis was artistically developed on the route uttarapatha, where one can enjoy the form of higher aesthetic due to transmigration of different philosophical thoughts. Sanghol art is deeply associated with Mathura Kushana idiom, where Buddhist and Hindu conceptual philosophy walk hand in hand to portray certain conceptual forms with different ideology, which is very much near to Hindu concept rather than Buddhist.

The discovery of a beautiful terracotta figure of Lord Karttikeya from the Kushana Layer (Huvishka period) is of later period. The image of Karttikeya was worshipped in the time of Patanjali³ but his stature of activities was connoted by different names i.e. Mahasena—commander of the army of God⁴ or Skanda Karttikeya—War God.⁵

The worship of Lord Shiva was prevalent in the areas like Gandhara, Begram and in the north of Aryavarta.⁶ The image of Shiva is usually portrayed over the coins of Gondapharnse, Vima Kadphises and Kanishka.⁷ Lord Karttikeya is

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1. "A famous Archaeological site, which is popularly known as *Ucha Pind* and situated on the Ludhiana-Chandigarh road in Punjab." Singh Fauja (ed.), *History of the Punjab*, Vol-I, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1997, p. 300.
2. Sharma, G.B., *Coins, Seals and Sealings from Sanghol*, Deptt. of Cultural Affairs, Archaeology and Museum, Chandigarh (Pb.), 1986, p. 17.
3. Coomaraswamy, Ananda K., *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, Dover Publications Inc, New York, 1965 p. 43. nl.
4. Puri, B.N., *India under the Kushanas*, Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay, 1965, p. 139.
5. Zimmer, Heinrich, *The Art of Indian Bollingen Series*, Princeton University Press, New York, 1968, p. 96.
6. Agrawala, V.S., *Bhartiyakala*, Prithivi Prakashan, Varanasi, 1997, p. 270.
7. Agrawala, Prithivi Kumar, *Prachin Bhartiya Kala avam vastu*, Varanasi Vishwavidyalaya Prakashan, Varanasi, 2007, p. 325.; Coomaraswamy Ananda K., *op.cit.*, p. 67.



Karttikeya (Terracotta)
Sanghol, Kushana period

considered as son of Lord Shiva and his image is well inscribed over the coins of Huvishka⁸ (Later Kushana period). A good number of Karttikeya images are traced from Mathura Kushana Layer, guised as Bodhisattva⁹. It shows that the worship of Lord Karttikeya was prevalent during Kushana period.¹⁰

The image of Lord Karttikeya, which is traced from Sanghol is quite small in size (9 cms) and of terracotta material. But its appearance and physical gesture is very much near to Kushana Mathura idiom.¹¹ The young boyish look form in standing posture represents young Karttikeya with a long spear. It is a brahmanical conceptual form of War God and also found on the coins of Huvishka.¹² As recorded by the coins, the Yaudheyas (ayudhajivisamgha) were known for their skill in war and worshipped Lord Karttikeya.¹³

The present imagery of terracotta material is a beautiful form delineated out of fine levigated clay. His headgear is just like a rishi's *coiffure*. He is holding something in his right hand and spear in another hand. The image is modelled with two hands only.¹⁴ His outfit is just look alike yaksha imagery of Sanghol. The over all treatment and preparation of the Karttikeya image is full of later Kushana phase at Sanghol. Backside of 9 cms high statue is flat but front part is intricately worked out. The image marked with Sanghol (Kushana Mathura) traits is entirely indigenious.

The image of Sakand Karttikeya is delineated with other images (One alongwith Lord Agni and another one is Kumara & Sakand or Vishakha). But Sanghol terracotta imagery is single and its all-iconographical signs are visual to identify the present image. Here is no sign of his *vahana* (peacock) because statue is broken right under his knees, but the image is well decorated with all possible details. The Sanghol image of Lord Karttikeya is small in size but it is beautiful example edifying revivalism of Hindu mythology in Pancanada (Punjab). Karttikeya imagery and numismatic proof with peacock devices¹⁵ shows the acceptance of Hindu (Gupta) rule at Sanghol after Kushana period in north of Aryavarta.

8. Coomaraswamy, Ananda K., *op.cit.*, p.22.

9. Agrawala, V.S., *op.cit.*, p.270.

10. Agrawala, V.S., *Ibid.*, p.270, PL 420.

11. Agrawala, Prithivi Kumar, (2007), *op.cit.*, p. 325, PL. 777.

12. Coomaraswamy, Ananda K., (1965) *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 43.

13. Mehta, Vasishtha Dev Mohan, *North-West India of Second Century, B.C.*, Ludhiana, Indological Research Institute, Ludhiana, 1979, pp. 43,44.

14. Agrawala, V.S., *Ibid.*, p. 270.

15. Sharma, G.B., *op.cit.*, pp. 27, 28, 29.

BOOK-REVIEW - I

***Re-Exploring Baba Ram Singh and Namdhari Movement*, by
Dr. Navtej Singh, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2010, pp. 1-276,
Price Rs. 300/-**

On May 7, 2008, Department of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala organized one-day Seminar on '*150 years of Namdhari Movement : A Recontemplation.*' The scholars and historians came to attend the seminar. They participated in its deliberations and contributed their research papers. When these papers were received by the Department these were ten in number and were in languages like English, Punjabi and Hindi. Besides these 10 papers, 15 research papers were collected from *Proceedings, Punjab History Conference*, and the Journal *The Panjab Past and Present* and have been mixed with them. Dr. Joginder Singh delivered his Key-Note Address (pp. 12-32) in the Seminar. S. Surinder Singh Namdhari made 'Address of Special Guest' (pp. 33-35). Vice-Chancellor of Punjabi University, Dr. Jaspal Singh presided over the inaugural session of the Seminar and appreciated the Department and its efforts for academics (p. 39). The scholars like S.S. Sanahi, Dr. G.S. Nayyar and Dr. Renu Divedi dealt with either the history of the Namdharis since its origin or its development and social character. Dr. Bhagat Singh has regarded the Kuka Movement as essentially as a religious movement (p.64) though it as interpreted wrongly by the British administration. A few *Subahs* of the Kukas and some Namdharis also have been paid attention by the author of the book for he has included the writing of P.C.Roy (pp. 77-83), Tara Singh Anjan (pp. 106-112) and Dr. Kirpal Singh Kasel (pp. 113-116). Further S.S. Sanahi and Suwarn Singh Virk have contributed their own articles for the book under review. Virk deals with the Punjabi literature as an important source of Kuka History (pp. 152-163). This literature was both in poetry and prose. The prose was socialistic (p. 163). Sanahi refers to Shaheed Bhagat Singh and his praise of the Namdharis (pp. 164-182). The book has an article of Dr. Ganda Singh entitled 'Was the Kuka (Namdhari) Movement A Rebellion Against the British ?' (pp. 185-203). Ganda Singh's article is followed by W.H. McLeod who theorizes the causation of Kuka movement. McLeod had done this in 1973 (pp. 204-231). He has described the Kukas as 'A Millenarian Sect of the Punjab.'

It is not an easy task to trace the origin of the Namdhari Movement. Obviously, Historiography as well as chronology need greater attention. Credit goes to this book for treating Historiographical aspect in view (pp. 232-252). The Police or

British Records are yet to be examined critically, because there are contradictions in the resources. However, both Dr. Navtej Singh and Dr. K.S. Bajwa deserve respect and greater appreciation for their evaluations of *Hukamnamas* of Baba Ram Singh and his ideas about Religion and Politics.

Nazer Singh

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BOOK – REVIEW - II

***When A Tree Shook Delhi*, by Manoj Mitta and H.S. Phoolka,
Rali Books, New Delhi.**

The political process in the country during the 1980's touched the highest degree of degradation in the form of attack by Indian army on Golden Temple at Amritsar. It resulted not only in the killing of hundreds of Sikhs in Amritsar and elsewhere in Punjab but also in destruction of large scale property of the Sikhs alongwith hurting sentiments and wounding the Sikh psyche in general.

As a repercussion two security men killed Indira Gandhi taking revenge of attack on the Sikhs and their holy shrines. Still the power at centre was bent upon 'teaching a lesson' to the Sikhs and the 'blessings' of higher authority lead to large scale violence against the Sikhs in Delhi and other parts of the country. The present work by a journalist and an advocate focuses on the extent of violence in Delhi alongwith participation of leaders, organisations and state apparatus in perpetrating crimes against the Sikhs. Also that how the Sikhs since 1985 to the present day had failed to receive justice.

The authors prove that the violence in Delhi was well-planned and organized and not a spontaneous reaction. Since on 31st October, 1984 the violence was centred around limited area and was comprised of attack and burning of Sikh property; both moveable and immovable, i.e., attack on motor-cycles, cars, trucks, shops, houses and gurudwaras alongwith beating up of the Sikhs.

The killings of Sikhs began the next morning in which local Congress leaders, *goondas* and police joined hands and killed 2,733 Sikhs in three days. The carnage took place in the localities of the poor Sikhs in Kalyanpuri, Mangolpuri, Sultanpuri and Delhi cantonment area. The mobs also attacked the historic gurudwaras of Rakab Ganj and Sis Ganj. While Sikhs were martyred, the Sikh girls and women were raped by gangs repeatedly. Mobs were promised to give Rs. 500 for killing a Sikh. Narsimha Rao did not call for the imposition of curfew or the army to please Rajiv Gandhi. On the other, the anti-Sikh violence was immediately controlled in Calcutta by the left front government.

Large scale violence, destruction of property and rapes of Sikh females were meant to break the bone of the Sikh community. It also helped the Congress to win over elections in the country with huge majority; indirectly, it succeeded to cash on the existing and created anti-Sikh situations. Also that it pressurised the President to appoint Rajiv Gandhi as officiating Prime Minister by ignoring the tradition; when he was not even a member of Parliament. Further, to sprinkle salt

on the Sikh wounds, the Congress government awarded the perpetrators of crime with higher posts and berths in the administration along with protection.

On the other, the victims of carnage and massacre, mainly women and children, were denied justice. Though the process began in 1985 with the appointment of different commissions and committees, but all failed to provide justice to the Sikhs and punishments to the criminals, politicians, bureaucrats and police officials. To the extent that the Rangnath Mishra Commission white-washed the conspiracy by the state who dubbed anti-Sikh violence as spontaneous reaction to murder of Indira and not an organized conspiracy.

Mishra concluded that neither Congress Party nor its leaders had organised Sikh carnage ; but, in fact, was result of some 'Unknown anti-Sikh elements and some Congress workers,' who did it at their own. He stressed that even police had no role in it. Mishra did not point out anyone who could be accused of carnage and thus also freed H.K.L. Bhagat and Rajiv Gandhi.

As a reward for 'dishonesty', the culprit Rangnath Mishra was promoted to be the Chief Justice of India and after retirement was appointed the first Chairman of National Human Rights Commission ! A mockery of democracy !! On 19th November, 1984 Rajiv Gandhi made a statement on the Delhi Sikh carnage that "When a big tree falls, it is natural that it shakes the surrounding earth." He failed to notice that after the killing of Mahatma Gandhi, the earth did not shake itself and also, ironically, after Rajiv Gandhi was blasted in bomb attack, not even a single tree was shaken !!!

The political calculations necessitated the appointment of another commission led by Justice Nanavati. As was expected both the commissions did no justice to the carnage victims. Nanavati, though, accused almost all the top Congress leaders in 1984 including H.K.L. Bhagat, Jagdish Tytler, Sajjan Kumar and Dharam Dass Shastri; but it limited this accusation only to the Congress leaders and kept top leadership out of it like Rao, Rajiv Gandhi and some others. Nanavati also freed the police officials.

The truth is that till today (on 25th August 2010) the state, administration and judiciary are mocking at the carnage victims. Yet it establishes the fact that the ruling power's involvement in large scale crimes could not be challenged so for they are in control of the politico-administrative and judicial structure. Also that the minorities in the post 1947 era would have tolerate the dominance of the majority community and accept their hegemony. Also that their demand for justice depends upon the discretion of will of the majority. Yet the students of 'history' could be well aware of 'implications' of such polity. The authors deserve appreciations for their noble attempts as prior warnings to the future formations and constructions.

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BOOK-REVIEW - III

***The Makers of Modern Punjab, What They Had to Say*, Compiled by Dr. Kirpal Singh and Prithipal Singh Kapur, Singh Brothers, Amritsar, 2010, pp. XXV+174, Price Rs. 225/- .**

The title of this book and its publication mode is significant for the title exhibits that the work belongs to the oral history. Infact, it is comprised of interviews of a dozen important personalities happened to active in Socio-Political life of North India since the 19th Century that was also an era of freedom struggle involving sufferings and sacrifices made by the youth and wise mature country-men of Punjab. A list of theirs covers the names of the following patriots :

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Master Tara Singh | 2. Baba Kharak Singh |
| 3. Malik Hardit Singh | 4. Khizar Hyat Khan |
| 5. Bawa Harkrishan Singh | 6. Niranjana Singh |
| 7. Nirain Singh | 8. Gurdial Singh Dhillon |
| 9. Parmanand of Jhansi | 10. Brigadier Sukhdev Singh |
| 11. Major-Gen. Mohinder Singh Chopra. | |

In the end there is an *Appendix* entitled as Major J.M. Short. Short was interviewed by Dr. Kirpal Singh. The latter also conducted his interviews with everyone mentioned above save Master Tara Singh, Baba Kharak Singh, Niranjana Singh and Parma Nand . These four had to face Prithipal Singh Kapur . Unlike them, Major Short had faced Dr. Kirpal Singh in London when he was busy in his book writing entitled as '*Select Documents on the partition of Punjab*'. Factually, speaking Dr. Kirpal Singh's concern with the victims of partition of 1947 was remarkable. He had recorded the statements of the victims to show the negative results of the Punjab partition. Short was familiar to Sardar Baldev Singh and Lord Mountbatten and he had been summoned by the British to India in 1947 so that the colonial state could passify the Sikhs who had served the British Empire with loyalty during the second world war but were not happy due to the partition play of Governor-General.

Dr. Kirpal Singh's interest in partition has been demonstrated by '*The Makers of Modern Punjab*' also. Partition is referred through PREFACE (XI) as well as through Kirpal Singh's interviews of Brigadier Sukhdev Singh and Major-General Chopra (pp. 149-168). The institutions that had made Kirpal Singh attracted towards oral history were (1) Khalsa College, Amritsar since 1930, (2) Punjab Govt. since 1964, and (3) Punjabi University, Patiala since 1973. The University had decided to set up an Oral History Cell in Punjab Historical Studies Department.

Under Kirpal Singh this Cell came into contact with the Oral History Association,

BOOK-REVIEW-IV

***Punjab, 1920-1945 : Agrarian Problems and Role of Peasantry in Freedom Struggle*, by Dr. S.D. Gajrani, Commonwealth Publishers, New Delhi, 2009, pp. i-xiii + 485, Price Rs. 1500/-**

The examination of agrarian issues is the second important arena of historical scholarship on Punjab during the British domination. Being predominantly an agricultural province, the evaluation of imperial intervention and its relationship with the diverse strata of agricultural classes assume special significance. The present study by Dr. S.D. Gajrani, a former Professor and author of a large number of historical texts is particularly meaningful because it covers both the areas of Punjab, controlled by the British and the Princely rulers alongwith its emphasis on critical analysis of the related aspects.

In fact the study covers the period from 1920 to 1945 with focus on the nature of agrarian society; both of the British and the Princely, character of control mechanisms, emergence of the agrarian unrest and its linkages with the ruling intervention, the stratification of agrarian classes and category, role of caste, class and religious distinction, character of unrest and methodology of protest, participation of different organizations, political groups and parties alongwith their ideologies, extent and scope of struggle and response of the ruling hegemonies; both of the British and the Princely monarchies.

The author correctly argues that it was a myth to characterize Punjab as the land of peasant proprietors alone. Infact he proves that the agrarian society was highly stratified comprising of zamindars; rich peasants, middle and small farmers, occupancy tenants, tenants at-will, agricultural labourers and servants. Obviously, the pattern of land ownership was highly differentiated and the size of the holdings in case of small landowners had further decreased whereas it increased with the big owners or landlords. Also that the number of the former category was much larger.

Further, although the socio-economic settings in both the territories of Punjab did not reflect much differences, yet the movements in British Punjab were termed as the 'Peasant Movements' and in Princely states, these were known as 'the Muzara Agitations.' Yet in these areas the culmination of peasant or agrarian protests were the results of a number of liaisons including the exploitation of both the imperial and Princely powers alongwith the landlords and money-lending classes. Interestingly, the unrest remained central to those districts with majority of Sikh population and community-wise participation remained weak on the part of

U.S.A. It was this interaction between Kirpal Singh and the U.S.A. Association that enabled him to have literature about the Methodology of Oral History (X).

What is Oral History? What is its Method? Why has it been relevant? The basic feature of oral history and Methodology is that it had its origin in the pre-literary phases of human civilizations. History of Hinduism since the Ancient times stood for knowledge through oral communication even during the Vedic era. History of Rajasthan during the Mughal period also stood for oral tradition supposed to glorify the Rajput heroism due to the presentation of battle-field by the bards patronized by the chiefs. Ballad was form of historical literature in this context. Through Editor's Note, Dr. Kharak Singh of Institute of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh, says that *Janam Sakhis* 'are the end product of oral history' (xiii). The Sikhs had a powerful oral tradition for presenting their history as it was evident from the works of Santokh Singh, Kesar Singh Chhibbar and Rattan Singh Bhangu. Even Bhai Veer Singh helped in the development of Sikh oral tradition by writings like *Guru Nanak Chamatkar*, and *Kalgidhar Chamatkar*.

Oral History continued to flourish outside Punjab and Rajasthan also. It did happen in U.S.A. after 1948 A.D. when the stories of second world war began to attract the Diplomats. Emergence of tape recording through Audio and Video techniques facilitated the revival of oral history as a primary source of History writing. In case of Sikh Studies, Karam Singh Historian was the first to employ it in modern times, though Giani Gian Singh had also tried to use it.

Dr. Kirpal Singh throws tremendous light on the History of Patiala through his interview with Malik Hardit Singh (pp.22-44). While remembering *Parja Mandal Movement*, the Malik says:

The main thing was the Communist influence. And the reason for that was the tenants... The landlords were there. The Police, Tehsildar, Thanedar and Magistrate were invariably under the influence of the landlords.

Malik further says that the communists in villages 'were very strong' (p.29). Their meetings were declared unlawful. Malik wanted to settle the problem and advised the Maharaja to avoid violence by reconciliation. But the Sirdars did not allow it to happen. About them Malik says :

But the Sirdars were a problem everywhere. They were reactionary... Law was not for them. Abducting the poor girls was common. Poor people had no voice. Injustice to the poor people, was rampant (p.29).

Dr. Kirpal Singh's worry about women or girls was not so much about the tortures they suffered in Patiala but it was also there in case of girls coming from Pakistan to Amritsar and beyond in 1947. Major General Chopra refers to it (p.161). His presentation is full of sentiments and humanism as shown by his *Jawans* to help the girls happened to be uprooted and raped due to partition by the Muslims around Rawalpindi or Sheikhpura. This book certainly makes the history of West-Punjab more important and significant to the Sikh Historians.

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BOOK-REVIEW-IV

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the Muslim and Hindu cultivators.

Moreover, the leadership came from various political organizations that began taking up the agrarian issues beginning with the Punjab agitation of 1907 to the rise of *Ghadr* Party, the Akali movement, the Kirti Kisan Party and the Communist groups. Yet role of the Congress Party and the Unionists remained marginal. Peasant indebtedness became major area of conflict and a political issue. The strategy of mass mobilization included propaganda, speeches, messages, appeals, leaflets and newspapers.

The author rightfully asserts that response of the British to the challenge was both strategical and political. It was combination of suppression with grant of limited concessions. The colonial state generally resorted to ban on publication of newspapers, holding of meetings, *lathi*-charge, firing, detentions with trials, internments and externments, fines, humiliations, beatings, floggings, abusing, imprisonments and hangings. Yet, in order to keep the rebellion under control, due to the fact that the army recruits come from peasant classes, grant of conditional limited concessions were motivated by the political compulsions of the colonial state.

Though the leadership lacked in certain aspects of struggles, yet these movements made tremendous contribution in generating and developing awareness against zamindars, moneylenders, imperialism and the princely ruling classes; thereby began to challenge their dominations. At the same time the left ideology took root among the peasant consciousness along with a reflection of potentialities of rural upsurge against landlordism, exploitation and imperialism.

Thus, the author is credited to correctly assess these movements with reasonable perspective along with his capacity to utilize a vast resources and source materials. Yet, there needed some questions to be answered that why these agrarian agitations remained confine to the central districts of Punjab alone ? Why did the Muslim and Hindu cultivators were more or less passive to the response ? Was there any relationship of this manifestation to the issue of communalism and partition ? Also that, had the author given some more care to the typing errors, sentence formation and one factual mistake, it would have certainly enhanced quality of the presentation.

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